VERSION 1.1

DARK HORSE COMICS

$2.50 US
$3.00 CAN

by Hisashi Sakaguchi

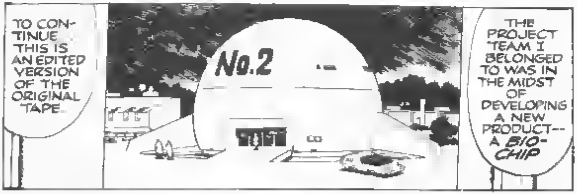
UDON
SHIN PANSHA

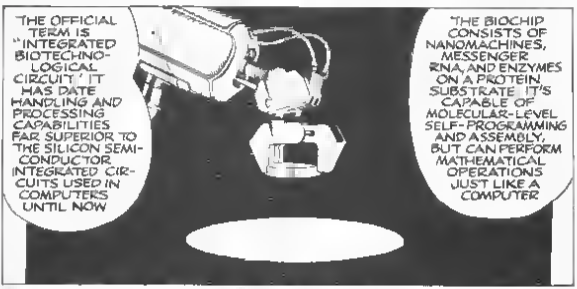
男のおしゃれ
2枚刃実践／充電交流式☆新登場!!
GZ
HAPPO, P.I.
5F(REAR)

Mitsuru Happo
Private Investigator
NOK NOK
COME IN!
ARE YOU MITSURU HAPPO?
CALL ME HAP EVERYONE DOES THEY USED TO CALL ME "HAP HAZARD" WHEN I WENT TO UNIVERSITY IN BOSTON
ANY WAY WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
I HAVE A JOB FOR YOU
A JOB?!
WELL, WELL, WELL! PLEASE, HAVE A SEAT!
I USED TO HAVE A CUTE LITTLE RECEPTIONIST, BUT SHE QUIT YESTERDAY LEMME GET YOU A CUP OF COFFEE!

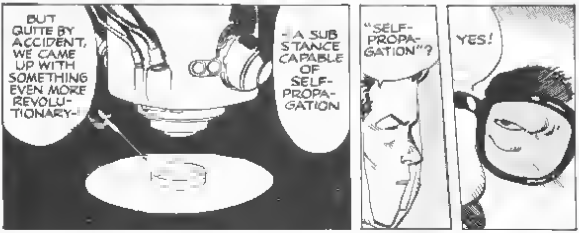
WHAA!
WHOOPS!
YAAH!
THANKS BUT I DON'T DRINK COFFEE
THAT'S GOOD
I WANT TO SHOW YOU A SPECIAL VIDEOTAPE COULD YOU LOCK THE DOOR AND LOWER THE BLINDS, PLEASE?
KCHAK
SKREEK
HEH HEH HEH
YOU ALL RIGHT?
I GOT ADMIT. I'M KINDA EXCITED
MUST BE ONE HELL OF A VIDEO HEH HEH
I'M AFRAID YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG IDEA. THE TOOTHACHE MUST BE AFFECTING YOUR BRAIN
HUH?
OH, YEAH. MY TOOTH.
ROTTEN TO THE CORE IT WAS. THOSE DAMN CHOCOBALLS
OWWW!
I'D LIKE YOU TO SEE THIS FIRST IT'S AN EXCERPT FROM A NEWS BROADCAST LAST MONTH
KLIK

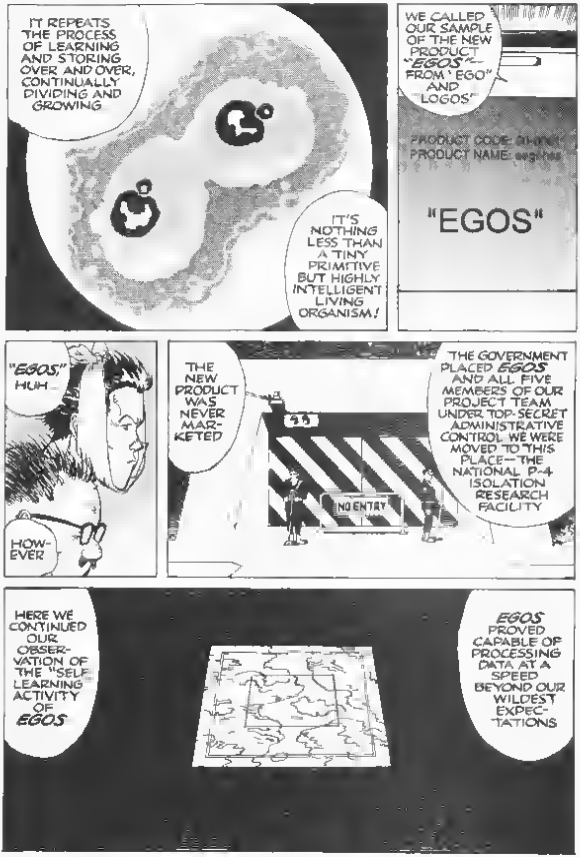
HEY, I REMEMBER THIS! ONE OF THOSE DEEP OCEAN FISHING BOATS CAUGHT THIS THING THAT LOOKED LIKE A MERMAID.
SOME KINDA HOAX, RIGHT?
IT WAS NOT!
OWCH!
BUT IT WASN'T IN THE NEWS AFTER THAT.
THAT'S BECAUSE--
--THE GOVERNMENT COVERED IT UP!
REALLY?
KLIK
AND NEXT--
OH, WAIT. I QUITE FORGOT TO INTRODUCE MYSELF. MY NAME IS SHIRO OSAWA! I USED TO WORK IN BIO-ENGINEERING RESEARCH AT A CERTAIN LARGE CORPORATION.
NO KIDDIN'


TO CONTINUE THIS IS AN EDITED VERSION OF THE ORIGINAL TAPE.
No.2
THE PROJECT TEAM I BELONGED TO WAS IN THE MIDST OF DEVELOPING A NEW PRODUCT-- A BIO-CHIP


THE OFFICIAL TERM IS "INTEGRATED BIOTECHNOLOGICAL CIRCUIT." IT HAS DATE HANDLING AND PROCESSING CAPABILITIES FAR SUPERIOR TO THE SILICON SEMICONDUCTOR INTEGRATED CIRCUITS USED IN COMPUTERS UNTIL NOW.
THE BIOCHIP CONSISTS OF NANOMACHINES, MESSENGER RNA, AND ENZYMES ON A PROTEIN SUBSTRATE. IT'S CAPABLE OF MOLECULAR-LEVEL SELF-PROGRAMMING AND ASSEMBLY, BUT CAN PERFORM MATHEMATICAL OPERATIONS JUST LIKE A COMPUTER.

NO KIDDIN'.
IN SHORT-
aah
KSHOO!
--IT IS CAPABLE OF THE MAJOR PROCESSING FUNCTIONS OF THE HUMAN BRAIN.


BUT QUITE BY ACCIDENT, WE CAME UP WITH SOMETHING EVEN MORE REVOLUTIONARY-
- A SUBSTANCE CAPABLE OF SELF-PROPAGATION
"SELF-PROPAGATION"?
YES!

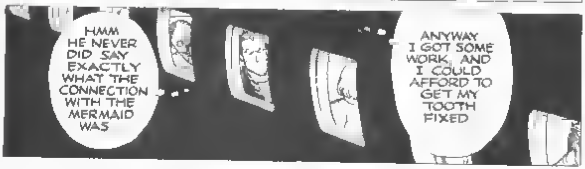

IT REPEATS THE PROCESS OF LEARNING AND STORING OVER AND OVER, CONTINUALLY DIVIDING AND GROWING
IT'S NOTHING LESS THAN A TINY PRIMITIVE BUT HIGHLY INTELLIGENT LIVING ORGANISM!
WE CALLED OUR SAMPLE OF THE NEW PRODUCT "EGOS"— FROM "EGO" AND "LOGOS."
PRODUCT CODE: 01-1701
PRODUCT NAME: egos
"EGOS"
"EGOS," HUH...
HOW-EVER
THE NEW PRODUCT WAS NEVER MAR-KETED
NO ENTRY
THE GOVERNMENT PLACED EGOS AND ALL FIVE MEMBERS OF OUR PROJECT TEAM UNDER TOP-SECRET ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL. WE WERE MOVED TO THIS PLACE—THE NATIONAL P-4 ISOLATION RESEARCH FACILITY
HERE WE CONTINUED OUR OBSER-VATION OF THE "SELF LEARNING ACTIVITY OF EGOS
EGOS PROVED CAPABLE OF PROCESSING DATA AT A SPEED BEYOND OUR WILDEST EXPEC-TATIONS

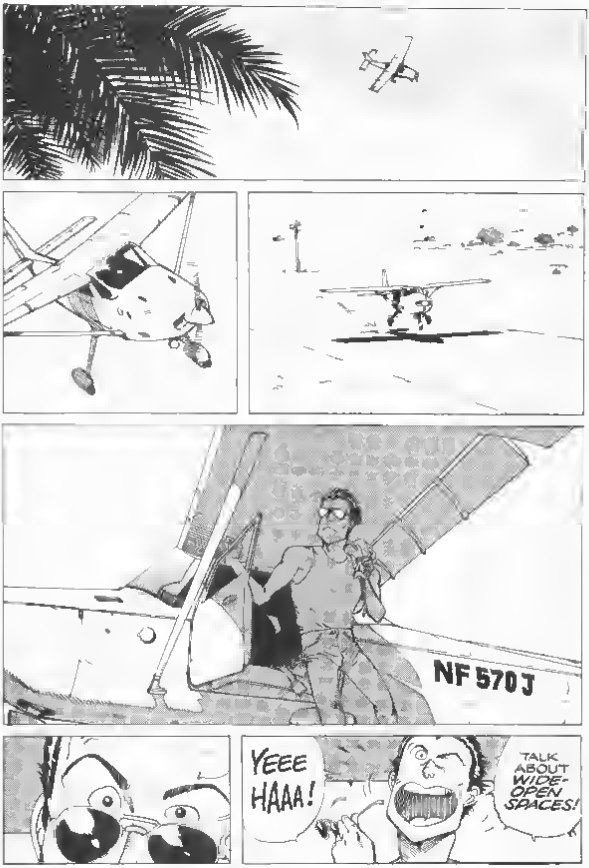
IT MEMORIZED THE CONTENTS OF AN ENTIRE PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM FROM FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE IN FIFTEEN MINUTES
IT THEN WENT THROUGH THE JUNIOR HIGH, HIGH SCHOOL, AND COLLEGE CURRICULA IN A FEW MINUTES
IT TOOK LESS THAN TWENTY HOURS TO PROCESS OUR OPTICAL TAPES CONTAINING ALL THE INFORMATION IN THE RESEARCH LAB LIBRARY-- OVER 100 TERABYTES
AND ITS LEARNING SPEED INCREASED EXPONENTIALLY
MEANWHILE, IT WENT ON CONTINUALLY REPRODUCING ITSELF AND STORING DATA
IN TIME WE BEGAN TO THINK THAT IT WAS ACTUALLY DANGEROUS
A HIGH-RANKING BUREAUCRAT MADE A REPORT TO THE PRIME MINISTER
CLASSIFIED
REPORT ON BIOCHIP "X"
THE DECISION WAS MADE TO PUT IT INTO PERMANENT CRYOGENIC STORAGE
SHSSSS

I DUNNO BUT IT SOUNDS LIKE ONE HELLUVA INVENTION
IF YOU MARKETED THIS whatsit WORLDWIDE YOU'D MAKE A ZILLION BUCKS WOULDN'T YOU?
[WHIR!]
I'M SURPRISED THE BUSINESSMEN AND POLITICOS CHOSE TO BURY SOMETHING LIKE THAT
UNFORTUNATELY EGOS EMITTED A COMPLEX ENZYME THAT PROVED EXTREMELY TOXIC TO HUMANS
IN THE EARLY STAGE OF ITS DEVELOPMENT WE DIDN'T KNOW THAT WE LOST TWO OF OUR RESEARCHERS
150
140
JEEZUS! THAT'S HORRIBLE!
THEY DEVELOPED A HIGH FEVER, FOLLOWED BY DEMENTIA, MASSIVE TUMOR-LIKE GROWTHS THROUGHOUT THEIR BODIES AND FINALLY DEATH
I'LL BE DAMNED--
--SO DOES THAT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE MERMAID?
WAIT PLEASE-- THERE'S MORE THIS IS DO HIGURE, A MEMBER OF OUR TEAM
HE TOOK THE EGOS FROM ITS HIGH-SECURITY CRYOGENIC STORAGE AND DISAPPEARED
THE NATIONAL SECURITY TRIED TO TRACK HIM DOWN THEY LEARNED THAT HE HAD ENTERED AUSTRALIA BUT BEYOND THAT, NOT A CLUE IT'S BEEN THREE YEARS SINCE THEN IF HE'S ALIVE HE'D BE 63
KLIK

AND DR HIGURE'S ALIVE ALL RIGHT!
I AM CONVINCED THAT HE HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH THAT MERMAID!
SHAAAA
I WANT YOU TO LOOK FOR HIM--
KSHOO!
ARE YOU WITH THE GOVERNMENT?
NO. THIS IS MY OWN PERSONAL REQUEST.
WHY DID YOU CHOOSE MY AGENCY?
BECAUSE IT LOOKS LIKE IT ISN'T DOING TOO WELL THAT MAKES IT EASIER FOR YOU TO INVESTIGATE WITHOUT ATTRACTING ANYONE'S ATTENTION AND SINCE YOU DESPERATELY NEED WORK I FIGURE YOU'LL TRY HARDER
SORRY I ASKED SO WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?
I AM A FRIEND OF DR HIGURE AND I'M WORRIED ABOUT HIM, THAT'S ALL!!
WHD
I'D LIKE YOU TO GO TO AUSTRALIA. HERE'S AN $8000 ADVANCE FOR YOUR EXPENSES

SHREEEEE


HMM HE NEVER DID SAY EXACTLY WHAT THE CONNECTION WITH THE MERMAID WAS
ANYWAY I GOT SOME WORK, AND I COULD AFFORD TO GET MY TOOTH FIXED


NF 570 J
YEEE HAAA!
TALK ABOUT WIDE-OPEN SPACES!

HEY, WAIT GIMME A - uh REESAYPTO!!

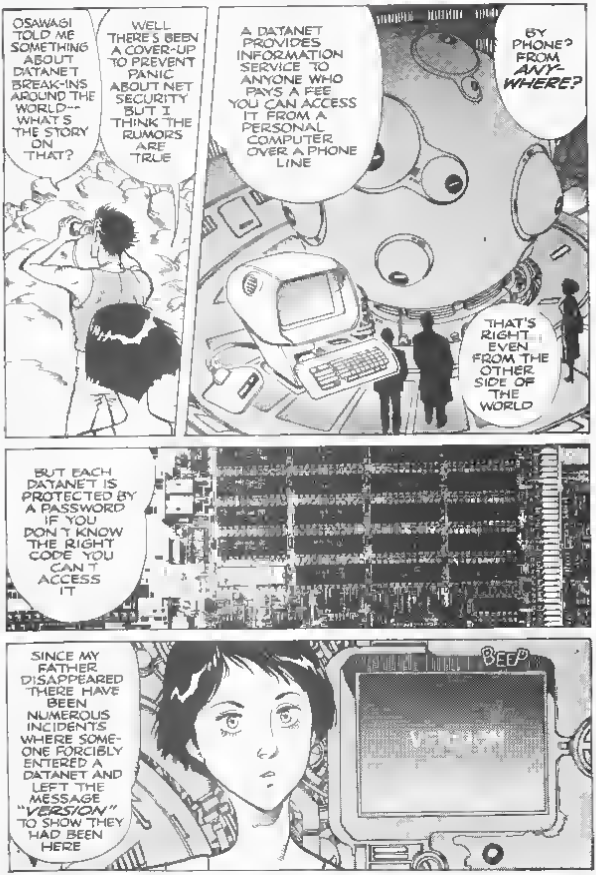
A WOT?!?
NO, WAIT REE-SEET! THAT'S IT! GIVE ME A RECEIPT!

MR. MITSURU HAPPO? I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU

HE DIDN'T TELL ME YOU WERE A WOMAN! KINDA CAUGHT OFF ME GUARD...!
WELL, MR OSAWAGI IS A VERY DISCREET MAN
MY NAME IS EIKO HIGURE-- DR HIGURE'S DAUGHTER
HUH?!
KONK
YOU BETTER HANG ON THIS IS GOING TO BE A ROUGH RIDE

I CAME HERE TO LOOK FOR MY FATHER AND WOUND UP STAYING ON. I'VE BEEN MAKING MY LIVING AS A TOUR GUIDE AND INTERPRETER
MUST BE KINDA LONE SOME
TOMORROW I'LL TAKE YOU TO A SPOT WHERE I'VE FOUND A CLUE
OKAY! err 'G'DAY MATE!"
YAAIRGH! WHAT TH' HELL?!?
MMM
KRAK
FWOP
WELL EVEN IN JAPAN MY FATHER PRACTICALLY LIVED AT HIS LAB I ALMOST NEVER SAW HIM AT HOME!
hee hee
PUNKY! STOP IT!!
OOK! KREE!
IKK!
SORRY ABOUT THAT-- PUNKY LIVES HERE WITH ME
I SEE

WOOK! NYERK!
MNCH
IT'S OVER HERE! I FOUND IT ONLY AFTER I'D HIKED AROUND THIS AREA FOR THREE YEARS
VERSION
URK!
OSAWAGI TOLD ME THAT WHEN DR HIGURE STOLE BGOS, HE LEFT A NOTE BEHIND WITH ONLY THE WORD "VERSION" ON IT
THAT'S RIGHT IN COMPUTER JARGON, "VERSION" MEANS A PARTICULAR GENERATION OR RELEASE OF A PRODUCT
THAT'S MY FATHER'S WRITING. NO DOUBT ABOUT IT
WHEW IT'S CARVED RIGHT INTO THE ROCK


OSAWAGI TOLD ME SOMETHING ABOUT DATANET BREAK-INS AROUND THE WORLD-- WHAT'S THE STORY ON THAT?
WELL THERE'S BEEN A COVER-UP TO PREVENT PANIC ABOUT NET SECURITY BUT I THINK THE RUMORS ARE TRUE
A DATANET PROVIDES INFORMATION SERVICE TO ANYONE WHO PAYS A FEE YOU CAN ACCESS IT FROM A PERSONAL COMPUTER OVER A PHONE LINE
BY PHONE? FROM ANY-WHERE?
THAT'S RIGHT EVEN FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD
BUT EACH DATANET IS PROTECTED BY A PASSWORD IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE RIGHT CODE YOU CAN'T ACCESS IT
SINCE MY FATHER DISAPPEARED THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS INCIDENTS WHERE SOME-ONE FORCIBLY ENTERED A DATANET AND LEFT THE MESSAGE "VERSION" TO SHOW THEY HAD BEEN HERE
BEEP

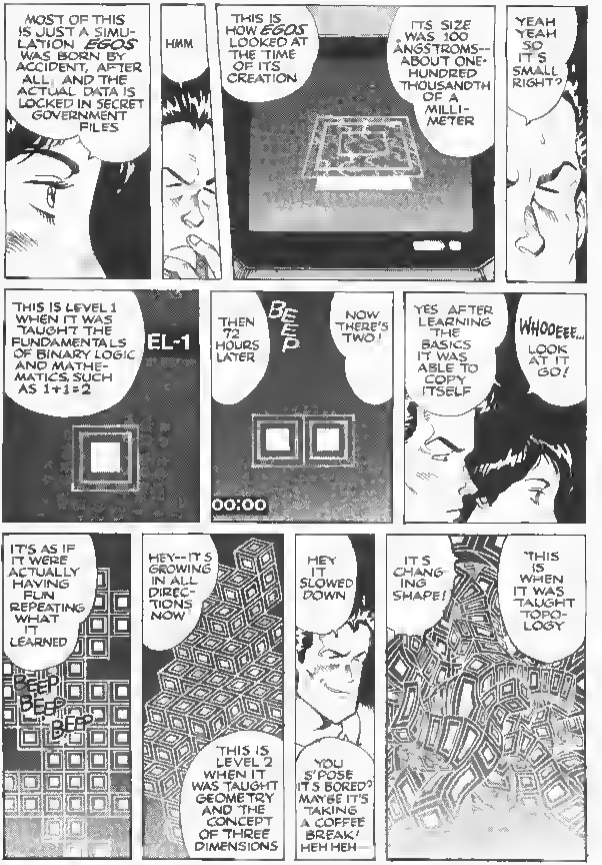
BESIDES DATA-NETS, IT'S BEEN HAPPENING TO THE FILES OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES MUSEUMS GOVERNMENT AGENCIES NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHING HOUSES RESEARCH FACILITIES...
VERSION
YOU MEAN THEY CAN FIGURE OUT ALL THOSE DIFFERENT PASS-WORDS THAT EASILY?
WITH THE HELP OF EGOS, THAT WOULD BE POS-SIBLE
SO YOU THINK THE DOC IS HIDING OUT AROUND HERE SOME-WHERE?
MAYBE MY FATHER KNOWS I WAS LOOKING FOR HIM AND SIMPLY WANTED TO LET ME KNOW HE WAS OKAY...
BUT EVER SINCE I FOUND THIS MESSAGE I CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO LEAVE AUSTRALIA
ALL RIGHT THEN!
LET'S START CHECKING OUT THE AREA!
BRMMMM
MAAAN SURE IS BEYOUUU-TIFUL COUNTRY

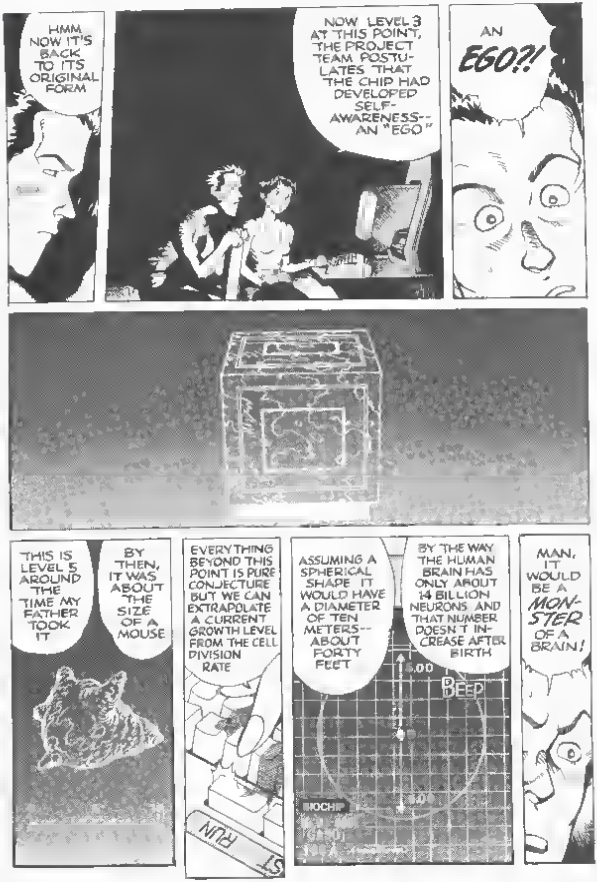
yeesh
WHY D' THE DOC COME TO AUSTRALIA, ANYWAY? AND HOW HAS HE BEEN SURVIVING OUT HERE? VERY STRANGE INDEED
AUSTRALIA
BEEN THREE WEEKS NOW

AND ALL I GOT TO SHOW FOR IT IS A BUNCHA' RECEIPTS FROM LOCAL BEANERIES...
WONDER HOW MUCH INFO EGROS HAS EATEN SO FAR
MM?
THE MORE IT LEARNS THE MORE IT SPLITS INTO NEW CELLS RIGHT? IF IT WAS BREAKING INTO DATA BANKS WORLDWIDE AND GOBBLING UP ALL THAT INFORMATION, IT MUST HAVE GROWN PRETTY DAMN BIG
WHAT STARTED OUT AS A MICROSCOPIC BIOCHIP IS PROBABLY THE SIZE OF A WHALE'S BRAIN BY NOW

WOULDN'T YOUR DAD BE HURT BY THAT POISON STUFF SCOS GIVES OFF?
HE TOOK WITH HIM ONE OF THE PROTECTIVE SUITS THEY MADE AFTER THE OTHERS WERE INFECTED
SO WHAT DOES YOUR DAD HAVE IN MIND ANY-WAY?
HEY MAYBE YOU AND OSAWAGI KNOW SOME-THING YOU'RE NOT TELLING ME EH?!
OSAWAGI SOUNDED LIKE THE NEWS ABOUT THE MERMAID CONVINCED HIM OF SOMETHING YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT?
OOPS-
S-S-S-SORRY I DIDN'T MEAN TO DO THAT T-THE DOOR IT SUDDENLY, uh. HEH HEH

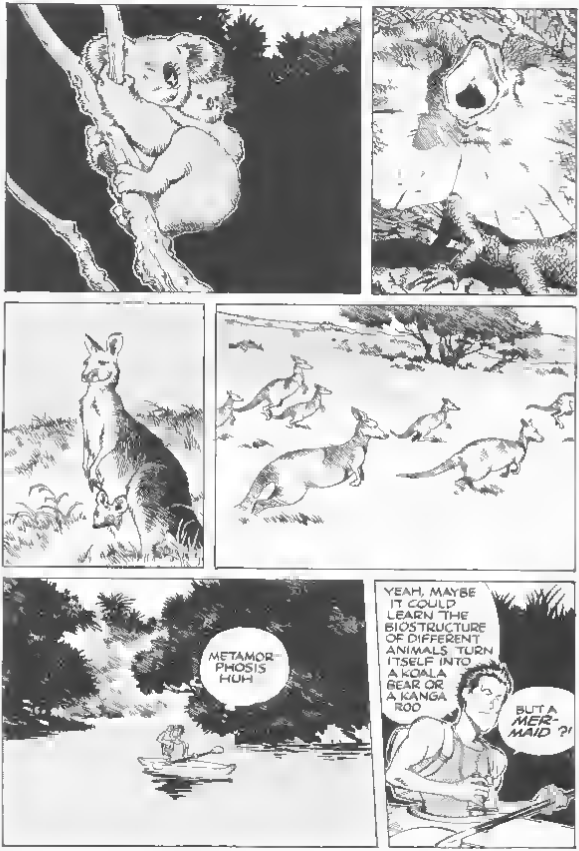
COME IN HERE
TURN OFF THE LIGHT
T-THE LIGHT..?
HA HA HA FINE WE CAN GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER I GUESS WORK CAN WAIT HMM?
I MEAN IF YOU HEH HEH
VEEEE
KLIK
SINCE YOU SEEM LIKE A DECENT SORT MR HAPPO I MIGHT AS WELL LET YOU SEE EVERY-THING
HEH
THIS IS DATA ABOUT EGOS THAT MR OSAWA& WORKED ON BY HIMSELF AFTER HE WAS DISMISSED FROM THE NATIONAL RESEARCH LAB TEAM
KLIK
BEEP
KLIK KLIK
OH
EH HEH HUH?


MOST OF THIS IS JUST A SIMULATION EGOS WAS BORN BY ACCIDENT, AFTER ALL, AND THE ACTUAL DATA IS LOCKED IN SECRET GOVERNMENT FILES
HMM
THIS IS HOW EGOS LOOKED AT THE TIME OF ITS CREATION
ITS SIZE WAS 100 ANGSTROMS-- ABOUT ONE-HUNDRED THOUSANDTH OF A MILLIMETER
YEAH YEAH SO IT'S SMALL RIGHT?
THIS IS LEVEL 1 WHEN IT WAS TAUGHT THE FUNDAMENTALS OF BINARY LOGIC AND MATHEMATICS, SUCH AS 1+1=2
EL-1
THEN 72 HOURS LATER
BEEP
NOW THERE'S TWO!
00:00
YES AFTER LEARNING THE BASICS IT WAS ABLE TO COPY ITSELF
WHOOEEE... LOOK AT IT GO!
IT'S AS IF IT WERE ACTUALLY HAVING FUN REPEATING WHAT IT LEARNED
BEEP BEEP BEEP
HEY--IT'S GROWING IN ALL DIRECTIONS NOW
THIS IS LEVEL 2 WHEN IT WAS TAUGHT GEOMETRY AND THE CONCEPT OF THREE DIMENSIONS
HEY IT SLOWED DOWN
YOU S'POSE IT'S BORED? MAYBE IT'S TAKING A COFFEE BREAK! HEH HEH
IT'S CHANGING SHAPE!
THIS IS WHEN IT WAS TAUGHT TOPOLOGY


HMM. NOW IT'S BACK TO ITS ORIGINAL FORM
NOW, LEVEL 3 AT THIS POINT, THE PROJECT TEAM POSTULATES THAT THE CHIP HAD DEVELOPED SELF-AWARENESS-- AN "EGO."
AN EGO?!
THIS IS LEVEL 5 AROUND THE TIME MY FATHER TOOK IT
BY THEN, IT WAS ABOUT THE SIZE OF A MOUSE
EVERYTHING BEYOND THIS POINT IS PURE CONJECTURE BUT WE CAN EXTRAPOLATE A CURRENT GROWTH LEVEL FROM THE CELL DIVISION RATE
RUN
ASSUMING A SPHERICAL SHAPE IT WOULD HAVE A DIAMETER OF TEN METERS-- ABOUT FORTY FEET
BY THE WAY, THE HUMAN BRAIN HAS ONLY ABOUT 14 BILLION NEURONS AND THAT NUMBER DOESN'T INCREASE AFTER BIRTH
5.00
BEEP
BIOCHIP
MAN, IT WOULD BE A MONSTER OF A BRAIN!

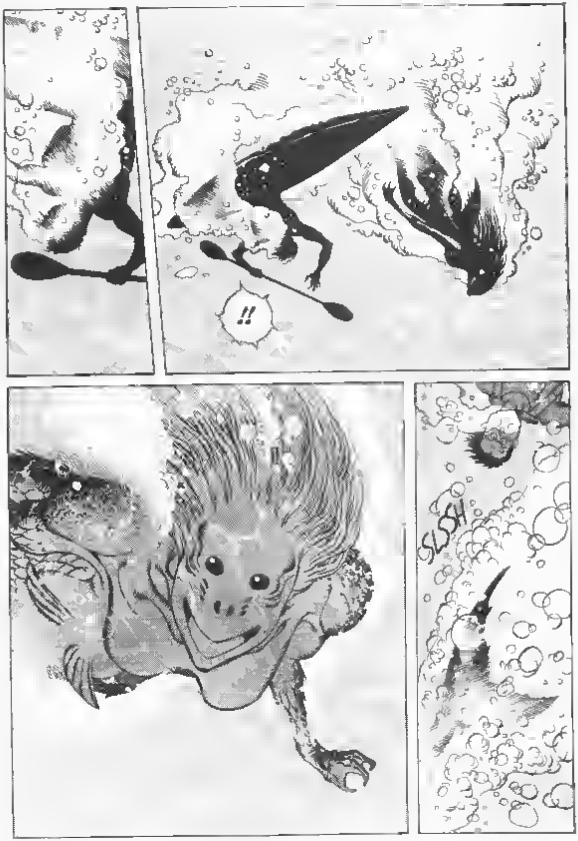
OF COURSE THIS IS A SIMPLISTIC CALCULATION
EVEN SO...
"DINGG♫
PUNKY JUST LOVES THIS MICROWAVE POUND CAKE--DON'T YOU PUNKY?
SMAK SMAK
OOK! OOK!
I STILL DON'T SEE WHERE THE "MERMAID" FITS IN...
:hic
I'VE BEEN THINKING MR. HAPPO "HAP"...
ghkk
WHEN THE HUMAN BRAIN CHANGES WHAT'S IT'S THINKING ABOUT--SAY WHEN YOU THINK OF WHITE CLOUDS OR FEEL THE COLD OF AN ICE CUBE OR EVEN WHEN YOU WANT TO BE SOMETHING ELSE THE BRAIN ITSELF AND THE REST OF THE BODY DOESN'T ACTUALLY CHANGE INTO SOMETHING ELSE. RIGHT?
OBVIOUSLY NOT!
BUT THE MORE EGOS LEARNS THE MORE IT DIVIDES ITS CELLS LEARNING IS LIKE FOOD TO IT JUST AS YOU SAID IT EATS KNOWLEDGE AND THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT GROW
Fig. 1-A

WITH HUMANS KNOWLEDGE AFFECTS THE MIND WITH EGOS. KNOWLEDGE DIRECTLY AFFECTS THE BODY
THAT MEANS IT'S PROBABLY CAPABLE OF METAMORPHOSIS
META-MORPHO-SIS?!
W-WAIT A SEC!
Y-YOU'RE NOT SUGGESTING IT COULD EVEN TURN INTO A MERMAID?! I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
YES EVEN THAT
GYEEK?!
AW, C'MON! A MERMAID'S JUST AN IMAGINARY CREATURE! HA HA HA
THE WHOLE THING'S RIDICU-LOUS!


METAMOR-PHOSIS HUH
YEAH, MAYBE IT COULD LEARN THE BIOSTRUCTURE OF DIFFERENT ANIMALS, TURN ITSELF INTO A KOALA BEAR OR A KANGA ROO
BUT A MER-MAID ?!

A CROSS BETWEEN A MAN AND A FISH
MERMAID HUH NAAH

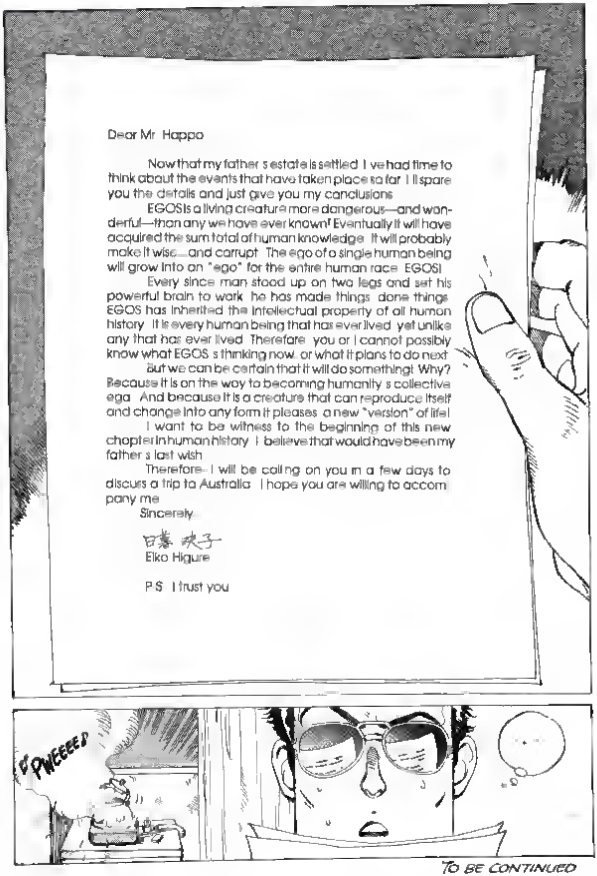
?!
EEYAAH!
SPASH


!!
SLUSH

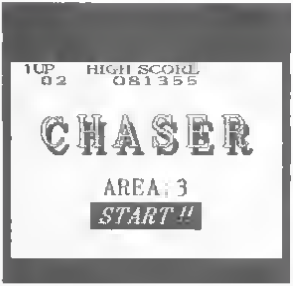
FHAAH!
hahh-
haah-
huhh
I GOTTA BE HALLUCI-NATING...
WHAT THE HELL IS IN THAT ROTGUT AUSTRALIAN WHISKEY?! SHEE-IT...
THIS IS NUTS! PEOPLE ARE PEOPLE, FISH ARE FISH! EVEN IF A FISH AND A HUMAN MATED THEY WOULDN'T HAVE LITTLE BABY MERMAIDS! NOW THAT'S REAL KNOWLEDGE!
HA HA HA
YO, EIKO!
HMM GUESS SHE WENT OUT
BRINGG
HELLO?
YEAH MY NAME'S MITSURU HAPPO- WHO'S THIS?
JEEZ, THE COPS!

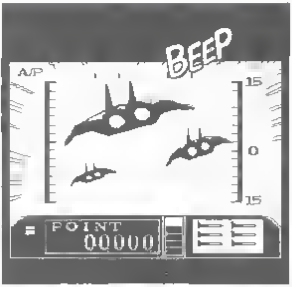
YOU RE KIDDING! A FISHERMAN FOUND A BODY ON THE SHORE OF A LAKE A JAPANESE MALE? DEATH DUE TO NATURAL CAUSES IDENTITY NOT KNOWN YOU THOUGHT HE MIGHT BE ONE OF MISS HIGURES TOURISTS SO YOU HAD HER COME DOWN TO IDENTIFY HIM RIGHT. RIGHT
IT WAS HER FATHER?!
DR. HIGURE ?!
AAHH
TALK ABOUT GOING THROUGH CHANGES-- HAULED OFF TO AUSTRALIA THEN BOOM! BACK TO TOKYO AFTER TWO MONTHS IT ALL SEEMS LIKE A BAD DREAM
CHOCO BALLS
MNCH MNCH
AW THE WHOLE THING WAS A CRAZY STORY ANYWAY I ONLY HEARD IT FROM TWO PEOPLE EIKO AND OSAWA@! AND ANYBODY COULD'VE FAKED THAT VIDEO I JUST GOT PULLED INTO THEIR LITTLE CHARADE DUNNO WHAT THEY WERE DOING IT FOR THOUGH

WHY DO PEOPLE DO THE THINGS THEY DO ? THIS BUSINESS ALWAYS HAS ME WONDER ING
MURDER ADULTERY BLACKMAIL EXTORTION HEH I CAN'T COMPLAIN ABOUT A LACK OF VARIETY
STILL THIS WAS ONE OF YOUR MORE ELABO RATE SETUPS
A WHILE AFTER THEY FOUND THAT "MERMAID" THE NEWS SAID IT WAS JUST THE BONES OF A DOG AND A TUNAFISH STUCK TOGETHER
I GUESS AS LONG AS THERE S A SUCKER BORN EVERY MINUTE
NOTHING SHOULD SURPRISE ME ANY- MORE ANYWAY... -Yawn-
KCHAK
SPECIAL DELIVERY FOR MR MITSURU HAPPO!
GO
Gamer's Quality


Dear Mr Happo
Now that my father s estate is settled I ve had time to think about the events that have taken place so far I ll spare you the details and just give you my conclusions
EGOS is a living creature more dangerous—and wonderful—than any we have ever known! Eventually it will have acquired the sum total of human knowledge It will probably make it wise—and corrupt The ego of a single human being will grow into an "ego" for the entire human race EGOS!
Every since man stood up on two legs and set his powerful brain to work he has made things done things EGOS has inherited the intellectual property of all human history It is every human being that has ever lived yet unlike any that has ever lived Therefore you or I cannot possibly know what EGOS s thinking now or what it plans to do next
But we can be certain that it will do something! Why? Because it is on the way to becoming humanity s collective ego And because it is a creature that can reproduce itself and change into any form it pleases a new "version" of life!
I want to be witness to the beginning of this new chapter in human history I believe that would have been my father s last wish
Therefore- I will be calling on you in a few days to discuss a trip to Australia I hope you are willing to accompany me
Sincerely
Eiko Higure
P.S I trust you
PIKEEEP
TO BE CONTINUED

VERSION 1.2
$2.50 US
$3.15 CAN
by Hisashi Sakaguchi
USHIO
SHUPPANSHA


1UP
02
HIGH SCORE
081355
CHASER
AREA: 3
START !!


BEEP
A/P
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POINT
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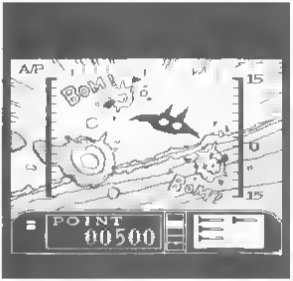
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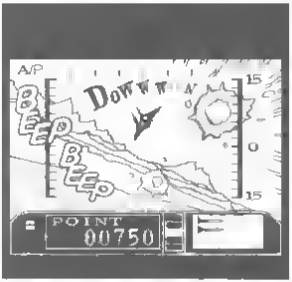
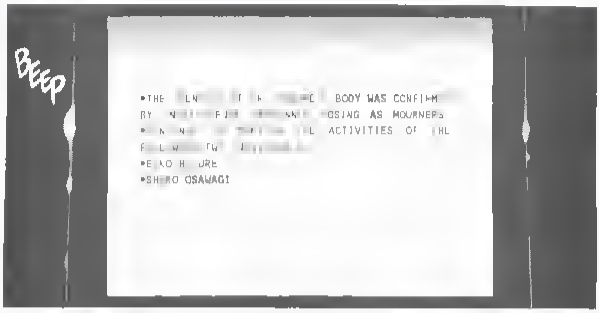
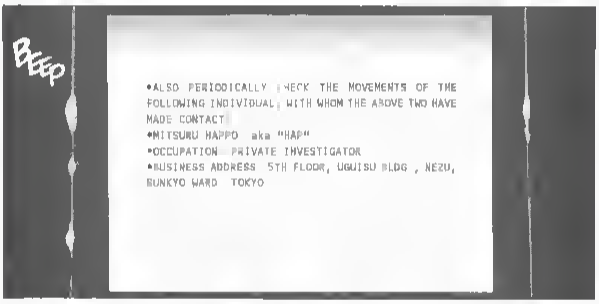
POINT
00500

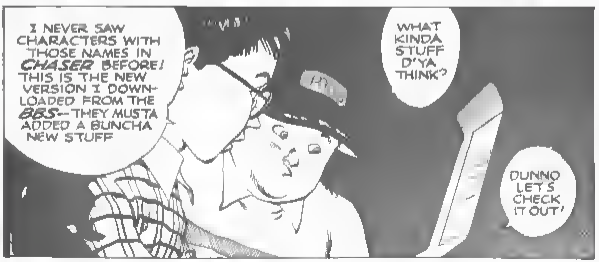

A/P
DOWWWN
BEEP
BEEP
15
0
15
POINT
00750

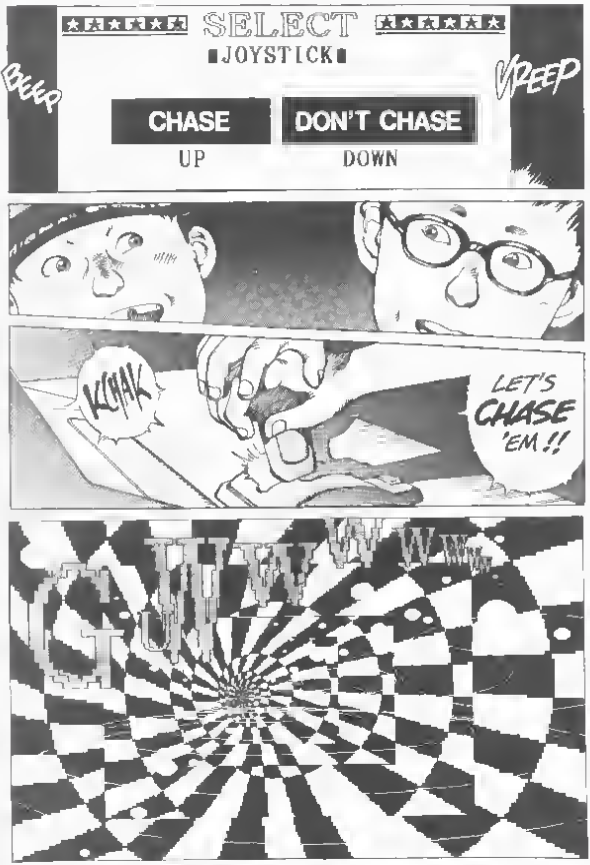
VSSSHHH

BEEP
*THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE GOVERNMENT S TOP SECRET "CHIP X" ARE CURRENTLY UNKNOWN
HEY WHAT 'TH' HECK?


BEEP
•THE [illegible] BODY WAS CONFIRM[illegible]
BY [illegible] POSING AS MOURNERS
•[illegible] ACTIVITIES OF THE
[illegible]
•EIKO HOURE
•SHIRO OSAWAGI


BEEP
•ALSO PERIODICALLY CHECK THE MOVEMENTS OF THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUAL, WITH WHOM THE ABOVE TWO HAVE MADE CONTACT
•MITSURU HAPPO aka "HAP"
•OCCUPATION PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR
•BUSINESS ADDRESS 5TH FLOOR, UGUISU BLDG., NEZU, BUNKYO WARD TOKYO


I NEVER SAW CHARACTERS WITH THOSE NAMES IN CHASER BEFORE! THIS IS THE NEW VERSION I DOWN-LOADED FROM THE BBS--THEY MUSTA ADDED A BUNCHA NEW STUFF
WHAT KINDA STUFF D'YA THINK?
DUNNO LET'S CHECK IT OUT!


SELECT
JOYSTICK
BEEP
VREEP
CHASE
UP
DON'T CHASE
DOWN
KCHAK
LET'S CHASE 'EM !!

WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
BEEP
BEEP
CRT
03
WHUP
WHUP

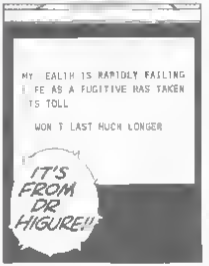
WELCOME TO THE TOKYO HELI-PORT
THANK YOU FOR FLYING AIR TAKEO.
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!
VREEEE
PASSENGERS BOARDING FLIGHT 017, PLEASE PROCEED TO...
HELLO. THIS IS HARRO GOOD NEWS- YOUR WIFE WASN'T CHEATING ON YOU SHE REALLY DID GO TO HER CLASS REUNION
FINAL CALL FOR FLIGHT 017
I'LL MAIL YOU AN INVOICE IN A DAY OR TWO

C'MON IN!
ラーメン
GIMME A BOWL OF RAMEN DOUBLE GARLIC!
?!?
WHEWW!
WHOO
AND IN FOREIGN NEWS TONIGHT...
-mmff-
-gip-
A SERIES OF MYSTERIOUS ATTACKS ON LIVESTOCK AND WILD ANIMALS HAVE BEEN REPORTED AROUND LAKE TORRENS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA
LAKE TORRENS, HUM
SIGN HAPPO DETECTIVE AGENCY 10 METERS AHEAD UGUISU BLDG. 5TH FLOOR

THAT'S NEAR WHERE EIKO WAS LIVING
SEVERAL DOZEN CATTLE, HORSES, AND KANGAROOS HAVE BEEN FOUND DEAD. ALL APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN RIPPED TO PIECES BY SOME UNKNOWN AND TREMENDOUS FORCE. IT IS NOT KNOWN WHO-- OR WHAT-- IS RESPONSIBLE
LOCAL POLICE ARE CURRENTLY
RRIINGG RRIINGG
WUMP
HA-HAPPO DETECTIVE AGENCY!!
OH, YOU'RE FINALLY BACK! THIS IS EIKO MIGURE!
EIKO !
I'D LIKE YOU TO COME TO MY APARTMENT RIGHT AWAY. YOU KNOW THE ADDRESS, RIGHT? HURRY!
KLIK
JEE? I HAVEN'T EVEN TAKEN OFF MY MAKEUP YET

WOW! NICE CONDOS!
STOP-- THIS IS THE PLACE!
MR HAPPO!
GIMME A RECEIPT!
THANKS FOR COMING ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE
HEY NO PROB! "QUICK FOOTWORK" IS OUR MOTTO AT THE HAPPO DETECTIVE AGENCY heh heh.
COMPARING THIS PLACE AND MINE IS LIKE HEAVEN VERSUS HELL
OHHH

MMM
SMELLS NICE A REAL WOMAN'S PLACE - NO MOLD OR COCK-ROACHES OR DEAD RATS
HERE-TAKE A LOOK AT THIS
THIS MESSAGE WAS TRANSMITTED TO MY LAPTOP BY MODEM IT'S DATED THE DAY BEFORE MY FATHER WAS FOUND AT LAKE TORRENS IT WAS STORED IN MEMORY AND I DIDN'T FIND IT 'TIL LATER
EIKO
IT'S ME

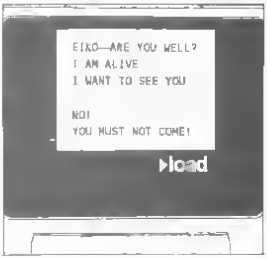

MY HEALTH IS RAPIDLY FAILING I BE AS A FUGITIVE HAS TAKEN ITS TOLL
WON'T LAST MUCH LONGER
IT'S FROM DR HIGURE!!

BUT I HAVE A STRONG FEELING THAT I MAY LIVE ON IN ANOTHER FORM"

AND THAT
NO—
I WON'T SAY MORE.
EIKO I HOPE YOU WILL COME TO SEE ME SOMEDAY

SO HE DIED SOON AFTER LEAVING THIS MESSAGE EH
THEN A WEEK AGO I RECEIVED THIS
takka takak

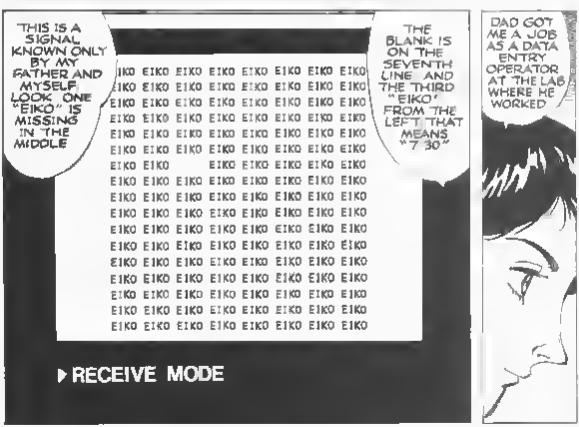
KLIK
load


EIKO—ARE YOU WELL?
I AM ALIVE
I WANT TO SEE YOU
NO!
YOU MUST NOT COME!
load

SO THIS ONE MUST BE A PRANK HUH
NO IT'S DEFINITELY FROM MY FATHER
WHAT ?!!
I'M OUTTA HERE!! I GOT ENOUGH OF THIS VOODOO CRAP IN AUSTRALIA!!
WAIT! SINCE THEN I'VE RECEIVED ANOTHER MESSAGE--
-EVERY DAY AT THE SAME TIME! I'M SURE ONE WILL COME TONIGHT!
ANY MINUTE NOW!
tik tik tik
beep?
RECEIVE MODE
IT'S HERE!!

EIKO EIKO EIKO EIKO EI

IKO EIKO EIKO EIKO EIKO EIKO EIKO
IKO EIKO EIKO EIKO EIKO EIKO EIKO
IKO EIKO EI


THIS IS A SIGNAL KNOWN ONLY BY MY FATHER AND MYSELF. LOOK. ONE "EIKO" IS MISSING IN THE MIDDLE
THE BLANK IS ON THE SEVENTH LINE AND THE THIRD "EIKO" FROM THE LEFT. THAT MEANS "7 30"
DAD GOT ME A JOB AS A DATA ENTRY OPERATOR AT THE LAB WHERE HE WORKED
▶RECEIVE MODE

I DIDN'T HAVE A PHONE AT MY DESK SO WHEN HE WANTED TO HAVE DINNER WITH ME AFTER WORK HE'D JUST SEND A MESSAGE OVER THE NETWORK TO MY SCREEN. DAD LOVED PUZZLES AND SECRET CODES. SO THIS IS HOW HE'D TELL ME WHAT TIME TO MEET HIM
tak-tak-tak
SEND MODE
BEEP
BUT EIKO YOUR FATHER'S DEAD
NO ONE KNOWS THIS CODE EXCEPT MY FATHER AND ME!
LOOK-- YOU'VE BEEN UNDER A LOT OF PRES-SURE!
YOU NEED TO RELAX. WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A LITTLE TRIP SOME-WHERE?!
MY THOUGHTS EXACTLY! LET'S GO TO AUSTRALIA TOGETHER!
PUNKY

FATHER'S CALLING FOR ME--DON'T YOU THINK SO? I CAN'T GET HIS WORDS OUT OF MY MIND--I MAY LIVE ON IN ANOTHER FORM"--AND I'D LIKE TO MEET THE EGOS MYSELF...
SORRY BUT I CAN'T AFFORD A VACATION...
I'M GIVING YOU A JOB--LOOKING FOR EGOS! YOU'RE A PRO, AREN'T YOU? YOU AFRAID YOU CAN'T HANDLE IT?!
WHOA N-NOT SO FAST THIS STILL SOUNDS CRAZY TO ME...
THANKS! I KNEW YOU'D AGREE! -kiss-
I'VE ALREADY BOUGHT TICKETS ON A FLIGHT LEAVING TOMORROW AFTERNOON.
GOODNESS LOOK AT THE TIME! YOU'D BETTER GET GOING--I'M SURE YOU'LL HAVE A LOT OF PACKING AND SUCH TO DO
B-BUT...
SEE YOU AT THE QANTAS COUNTER AT NOON! DON'T FORGET YOUR PASSPORT!
tak
takka
tak

FATHER...

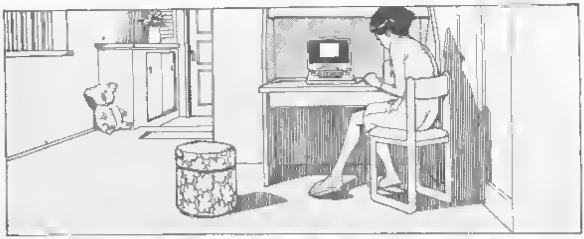
I'VE ONLY BEEN DREAMING THAT YOU WERE DEAD,
HAVEN'T I?
YOU'RE REALLY ALIVE, AREN'T YOU?
BUT WHERE?
OUTSIDE MY DREAMS?

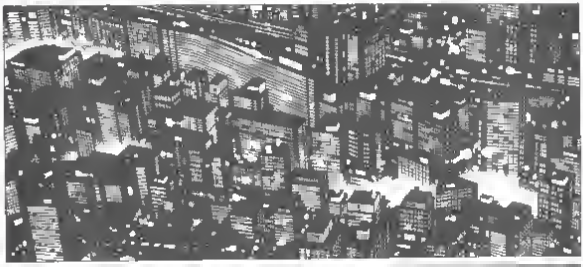
ARE MY WORDS REACHING YOU?

YOU ALWAYS WORE A FROWN...
BUT YOU WERE ALSO ALWAYS SWEET TO ME. .

SO HERE'S MY ANSWER=

I'M COMING I'M COMING I'M COMING
I'M COMING I'M COMING I'M COMING
I'M COMING I'M COMING I'M COMING
I'M COMING I'M COMING I'M COMING
I'M COMING I'M COMING I'M COMING
I'M COMING I'M COMING I'M COMING
I'M COMING I'M COMING I'M COMING
I'M COMING I'M COMING I'M COMING
I'M COMING I'M COM



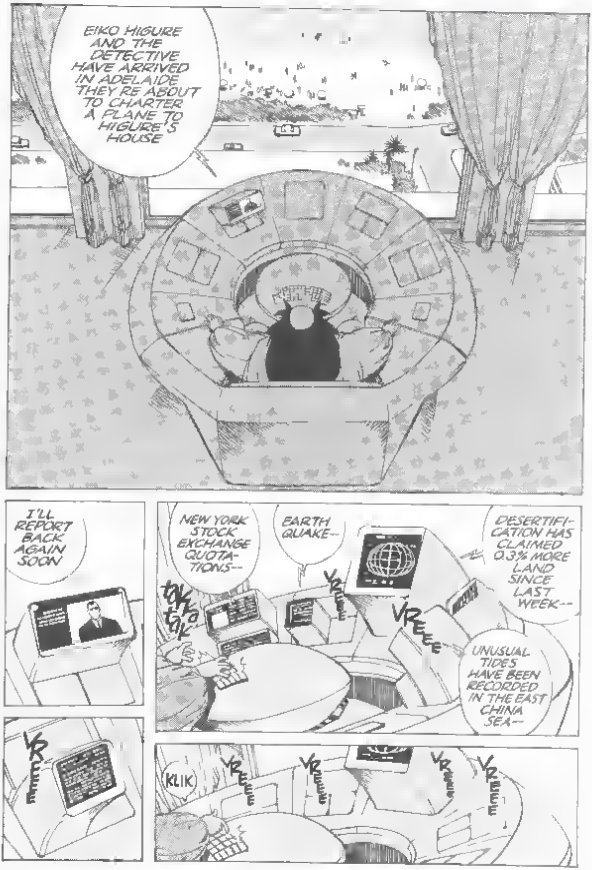


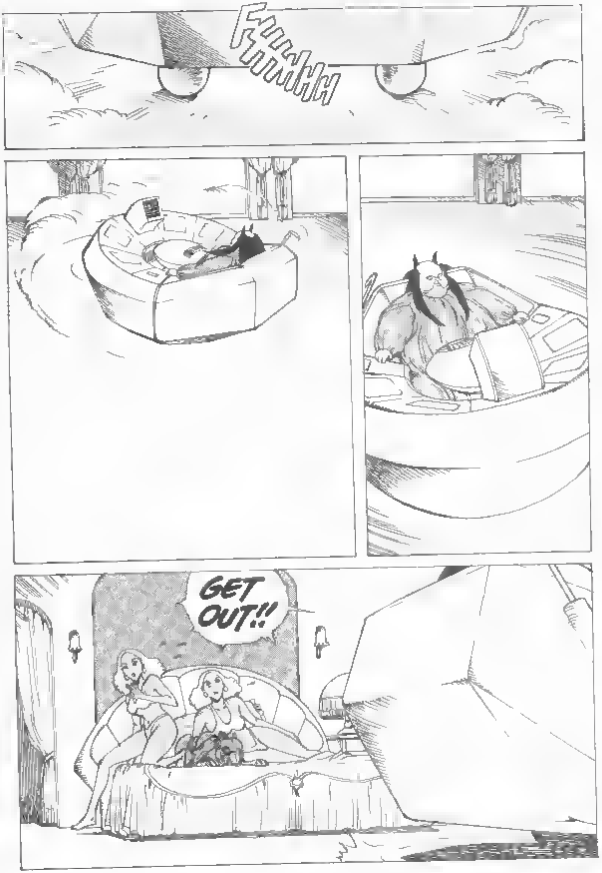
HUH? THE DOOR'S OPEN...?!
FWMD
WHAK
SKRASH!
WHOK
UHN!
KLIK
SHEE-IT!

LOOKS LIKE THEY WERE IN THE MIDDLE OF SEARCHING THE JOINT WHEN I WALKED IN ON 'EM
VRAMM
FANCY CAR--THEY WEREN'T JUST ORDINARY BURGLARS, THAT'S FOR SURE
OSAWAGI SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS GETTING IN ON THE ACT. I WONDER
SHREEEE

AUSTRALIA:
GREAT BARRIER REEF
THAT'S A WEIRD-LOOKING FISH AT THE HEAD OF THAT SCHOOL DOWN THERE
KINDA LOOKS LIKE A SKINNY DUGONG EH?
YEAH MAYBE IT'S A MERMAID, haw haw
LET'S GO DOWN AND GET A CLOSER LOOK
WHIP WHIP WHIP

THE GOLD COAST
SECRET

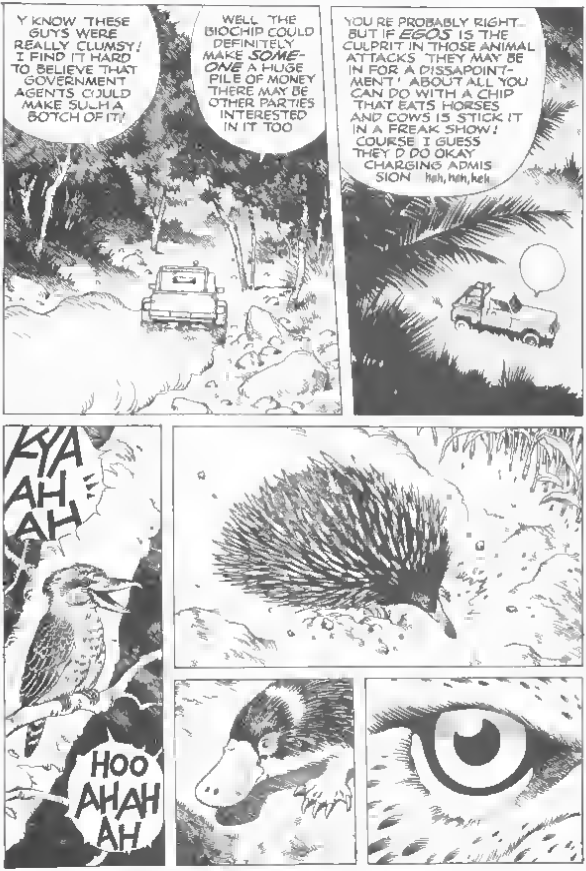

EIKO HIGURE AND THE DETECTIVE HAVE ARRIVED IN ADELAIDE. THEY'RE ABOUT TO CHARTER A PLANE TO HIGURE'S HOUSE
I'LL REPORT BACK AGAIN SOON
NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE QUOTATIONS--
EARTH QUAKE--
DESERTIFICATION HAS CLAIMED 0.3% MORE LAND SINCE LAST WEEK--
UNUSUAL TIDES HAVE BEEN RECORDED IN THE EAST CHINA SEA--
KLIK

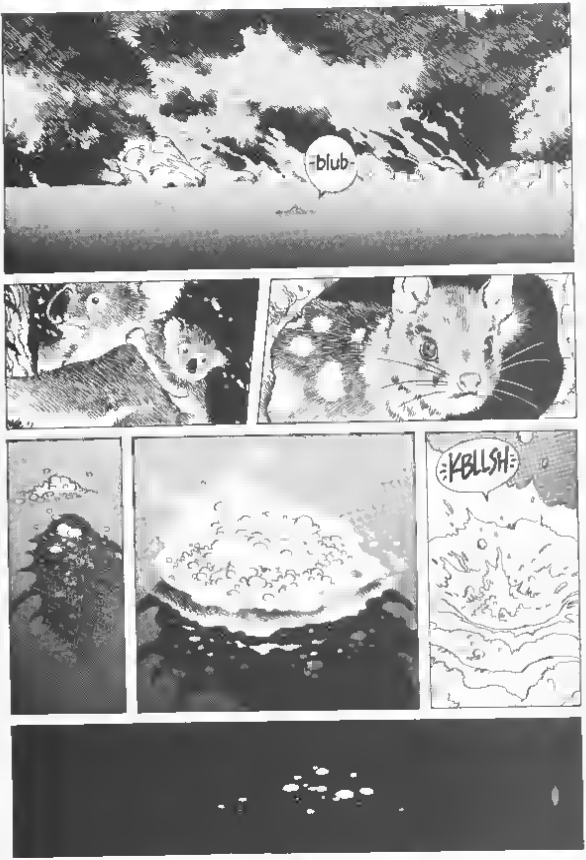

FUNCH
GET OUT!!

-STRAP-
GRRRR
KCHAK
WHOOSH
BEEP BEEP
VLLT
tak tak
WAS PUNKY A GOOD BOY WHILE I WAS GONE?
WOOK! KREE!
OH YES HE WAS QUITE WELL BEHAVED
"THIS IS MARGARET MY LANDLADY
NAME'S HAPPO--CALL ME HAP
HOW D'YOU DO MISTER uh HOPPO. EIKO AND I ARE NEXT DOOR NEIGHBORS--ONLY THREE MILES APART!

LAKE TORRENS
1.5 km
I DUNNO T MIGHT BE GOGGS OR IT MIGHT NOT
BUT YOU SAW THAT MERMAID NEAR THOSE TREES DIDN'T YOU HAP
AAH, THAT WAS JUST MY HANG OVER OR DTS OR SOME TH N
HOW ARE YOUR BRU SES BY THE WAY?

LAKE TORRENS
15 km
I DUNNO IT MIGHT BE EGOS, OR IT MIGHT NOT
BUT YOU SAW THAT "MERMAID" NEAR THOSE TREES DIDN'T YOU, HAP?
AAH THAT WAS JUST MY HANG-OVER OR D7's OR SOME THIN'
KOK
HOW ARE YOUR BRUISES BY THE WAY?


Y KNOW THESE GUYS WERE REALLY CLUMSY! I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT GOVERNMENT AGENTS COULD MAKE SUCH A BOTCH OF IT!!
WELL THE BIOCHIP COULD DEFINITELY MAKE SOME-ONE A HUGE PILE OF MONEY THERE MAY BE OTHER PARTIES INTERESTED IN IT TOO
YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT... BUT IF EBOLA IS THE CULPRIT IN THOSE ANIMAL ATTACKS THEY MAY BE IN FOR A DISSAPOINT-MENT! ABOUT ALL YOU CAN DO WITH A CHIP THAT EATS HORSES AND COWS IS STICK IT IN A FREAK SHOW! COURSE I GUESS THEY'D DO OKAY CHARGING ADMIS SION heh, heh, heh
KYA AH AH!
HOO AHAH AH


-blub-
-KBLLSH-

SURE GOT DARK FAST
NEVER SEEN A LAPTOP WITH AN ANTENNA BEFORE
IT'S A MILITARY PROTOTYPE DAD WAS TESTING—IT CAN SEND AND RECEIVE MESSAGES ANYWHERE VIA LOCAL *UHF* COMSAT REPEATERS.
KLIK
taka takka
RECEIVE <STANDBY>

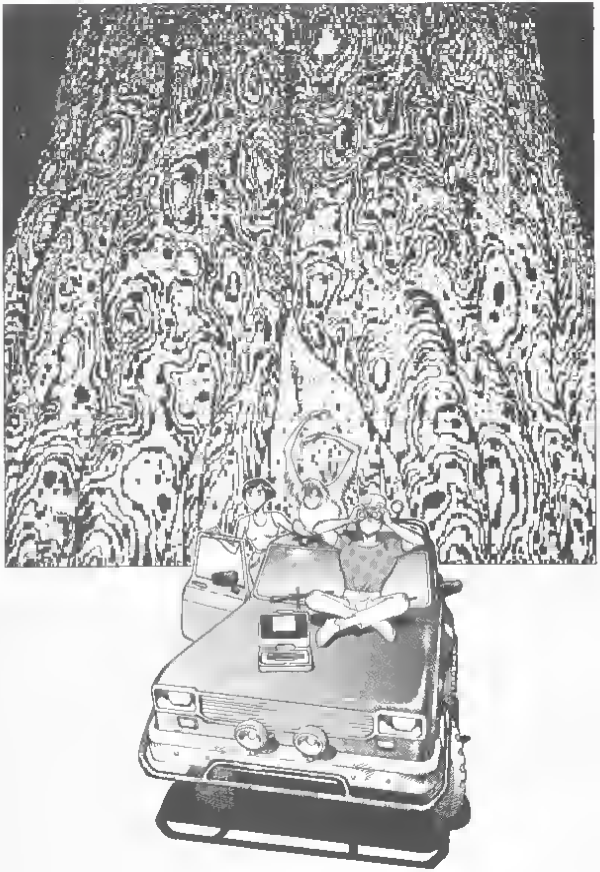
ZZNORK
SZzz
BEEP
RECEIVE MODE
!!
BEEP BEEP BEEP
PEE!!
EIKO
BEEP BEEP BEEP
EIKO: DON'T COME! DON'T!!
FATHER !!
KSH
BEEP BEEP BEEP
EIKO EIKO EIKO EIKO
IKO EIKO EIKO
HAP!! WAKE UP!!

EH?! WHAZ-ZAT?!
KOKI
BEEP
EIKO LEAVE! LEAVE NOW!!
BEEP BEEP BEEP
EIKO EIKO EIKO EIKO EIKO
EIKO EIKO EIKO
EIKO EIKO
EIKO EIKO
WHAT THE HELL?! FIRST HE SAYS LEAVE THEN HE WANTS YOU TO MEET HIM AT THREE?!
FATHER! WHICH IS IT?!
IT'S ALMOST THREE A.M. NOW!!
DO YOU SEE ANYTHING OUT THERE?!
OOK OOK YEEK!

TO BE CONTINUED

VERSION 1.3

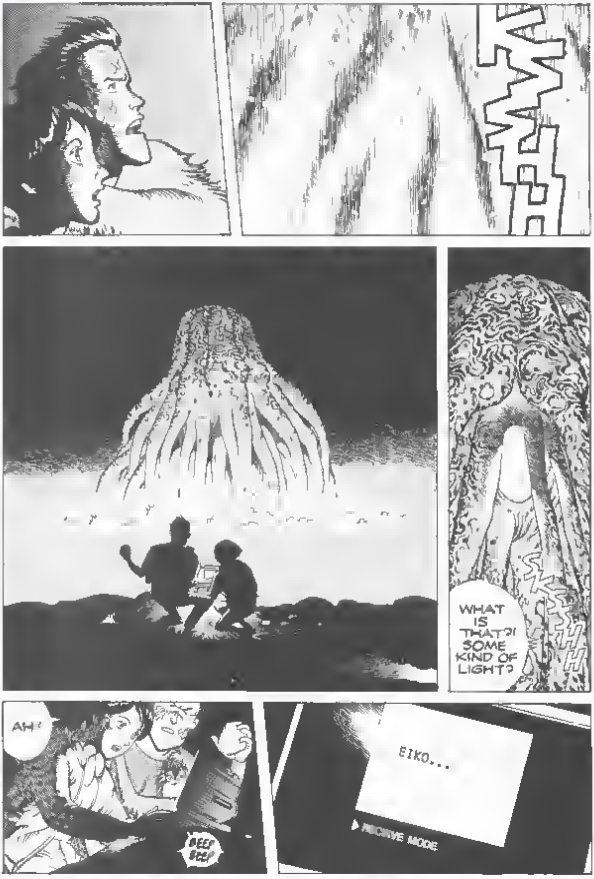
DARK HORSE COMICS
$2.50 US
$3.15 CAN
by Hisashi Sakaguchi
USHIO SHUPPANSHA

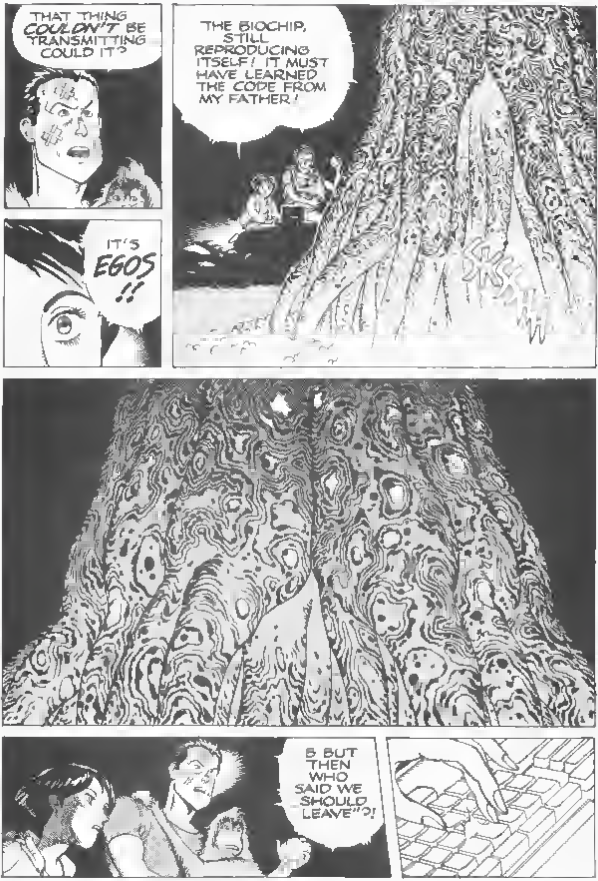


BEEP
EIKO
LEAVE NOW!!
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
EIKOEIKOEIKOEIKOEI
EIKOEIKOEIKOEIKOEIK
EIKOEIKOEIKOEIKOEIKO
CAN'T MAKE UP HIS MIND!
TAK TAK TAKKA
BEEP
▶SEND MODE
FATHER, WHAT SHOULD I DO? FATHER!!
TAKKA TAK..
▶RECEIVE MODE
NO RESPONSE
LET ME TRY SOME-THING ELSE
>?DETERMINE CODE ADDRESS OF THE SENDER.
BEEP BEEP
NOT LOGGED.
SWITCH TO PHYSICAL SEARCH MODE.
TAK TAKKA TAK
>RF ECHO/DELAY TRACKING ON

BEEP... BEEP
200
N
W
E
VREEP
WHAT IN THE WORLD...? 200 YARDS NORTHWEST-- THAT'S OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAKE!
THERE IT IS!!
IT'S COMING CLOSER!

I'M SWITCHING ON THE IR SCANNER!
KLIK
BEEP
LOOK!
WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?!
BLSSH BLBBB
OOK!
!!
BLSSHH


AHHH
WHAT IS THAT?! SOME KIND OF LIGHT?
AH!
BEEP BEEP
EIKO...
RECEIVE MODE


THAT THING COULDN'T BE TRANSMITTING COULD IT?
THE BIOCHIP, STILL REPRODUCING ITSELF! IT MUST HAVE LEARNED THE CODE FROM MY FATHER!
IT'S EGOS !!
"BUT THEN WHO SAID WE SHOULD LEAVE"?!

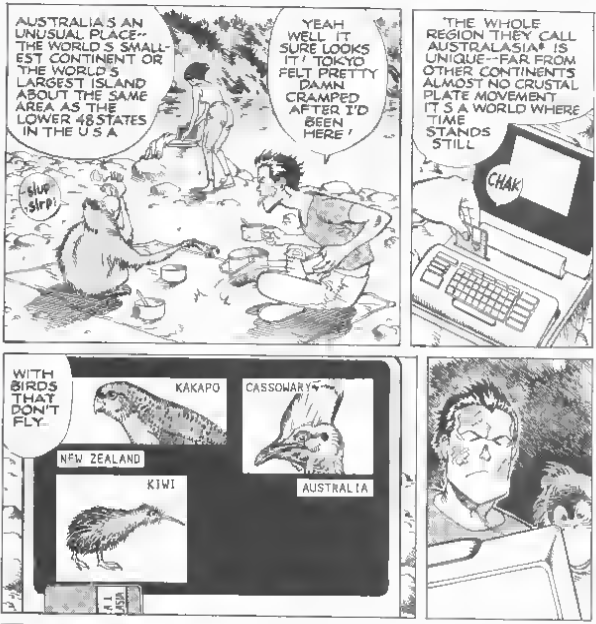
TAK TAK TAKKA
THIS IS EIKO. YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO MEET ME, DIDN'T YOU? WHO WAS IT WHO TOLD ME TO "LEAVE"?
NO RE-SPONSE HUH.
I'LL TRY TO ACCESS THE INTERNAL MEMORY OF THE EGOS. IF WE CAN READ DATA DIRECTLY, WE SHOULD LEARN SOME-THING
OH NO, I FORGOT! WE DON'T KNOW THE ACCESS CODE FOR EGOS!
WHY DON'T YOU JUST TRY "EGOS"?
TAK TAKKA TAK
>ACCESS
PASSWORD: >EGOS
INCORRECT PASSWORD--ACCESS DENIED
TAKKA TAK
PASSWORD: >egos
INCORRECT PASSWORD--ACCESS DENIED
TAK TAK
PASSWORD: >SOGE
INCORRECT PASSWORD--ACCESS DENIED
TAKKA TAK TAK
PASSWORD: >soge
PASSWORD: >EGO+LOGOS
PASSWORD: >EGO/LOGOS
PASSWORD: >00-0001
NONE OF THEM WORK! WE CAN'T GET IN!

KBLOOSH
YOW!
IT'S GROWING SCALES ON THE OUTSIDE!
THE ENTIRE FORM IS CHANG-ING!

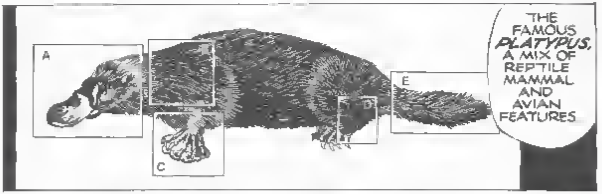
SPSSH
!
A MERMAID ?!
WAIT! DON'T GO!

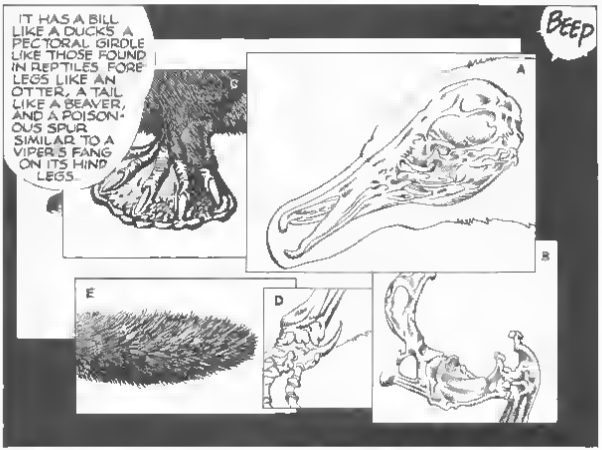
IT'S NOT TRANS-MITTING ANYMORE
MAN I'M JUST GLAD IT DIDN'T EAT US
JUST WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT ROCK MR HAPPO?
HUH?
EH HEH HEH
THDD
WELL I'LL BE DAMNED!
IT MUST HAVE BEEN A GOOD FIFTEEN SIXTEEN FEET HIGH...
THINK WE GOT ANY GOOD SHOTS?
KLIK
HELL, YES! THIS HOLOCAM COULD TAKE PHOTOS INSIDE A CAVE AT MIDNIGHT!
BETTER TRANSMIT THEM RIGHT AWAY
BEEP
SOSH

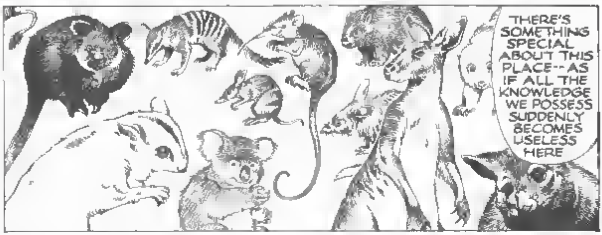
BREAKFAST'S READY!
YOW! HOT HOT!
KANG KANG
WOOK! OOK!
NO SIGN OF IT SINCE LAST NIGHT
-slrp- -gulp-
THIS STILL DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE TO ME. COULD THAT THING REALLY BE THE BIO-CHIP?
I'M SURE PEOPLE FELT THE SAME WAY WHEN THEY SAW A CAR OR A TV. THEY HAD NO IDEA OF HOW THEY WOULD EVENTUALLY EVOLVE HOW THEY WOULD AFFECT OUR SOCIETY
AT LEAST THE BASIC PURPOSE WAS CLEAR. CARS ARE TRANSPORT. TVs TRANSMIT IMAGES. BUT WHAT WAS THAT? A MACHINE FOR US TO USE OR A LIVING CREATURE?
OW!
HEY, WHY DID YOUR DAD COME TO AUSTRALIA, ANYWAY?
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THAT, TOO
AND?


AUSTRALIA'S AN UNUSUAL PLACE-- THE WORLD'S SMALLEST CONTINENT OR THE WORLD'S LARGEST ISLAND ABOUT THE SAME AREA AS THE LOWER 48 STATES IN THE U.S.A.
YEAH WELL IT SURE LOOKS IT! TOKYO FELT PRETTY DAMN CRAMPED AFTER I'D BEEN HERE!
SLUP SLRP!
THE WHOLE REGION THEY CALL AUSTRALASIA* IS UNIQUE--FAR FROM OTHER CONTINENTS ALMOST NO CRUSTAL PLATE MOVEMENT IT'S A WORLD WHERE TIME STANDS STILL
CHAK!
WITH BIRDS THAT DON'T FLY.
KAKAPO
CASSOWARY
NEW ZEALAND
KIWI
AUSTRALIA
THE EMU, WHICH CAN REACH SIX FEET HIGH
AND THE EXTINCT MOA, WHICH GOT UP TO ELEVEN FEET TALL THEY SAY

*Australasia is a geographic designation [illegible] It includes Australia, Tasmania, New Guinea [illegible] islands

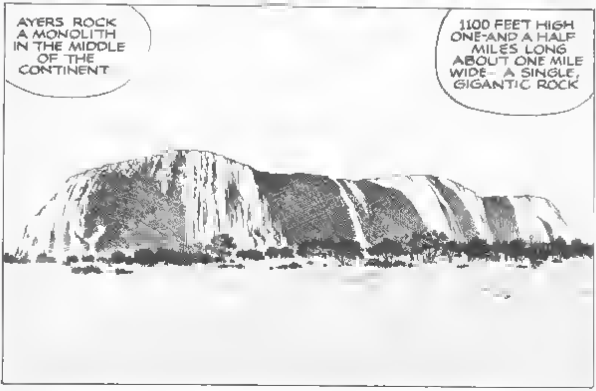

A
C
D
E
THE FAMOUS *PLATYPUS*, A MIX OF REPTILE MAMMAL AND AVIAN FEATURES


IT HAS A BILL LIKE A DUCK'S, A PECTORAL GIRDLE LIKE THOSE FOUND IN REPTILES, FORE LEGS LIKE AN OTTER, A TAIL LIKE A BEAVER, AND A POISONOUS SPUR SIMILAR TO A VIPER'S FANG ON ITS HIND LEGS.
BEEP
A
B
C
D
E


THERE'S SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT THIS PLACE-- AS IF ALL THE KNOWLEDGE WE POSSESS SUDDENLY BECOMES USELESS HERE

AUSTRALIA HAS SIX HUNDRED KINDS OF EUCALYPTUS WHICH CAN BE ANYWHERE FROM THE SIZE OF A BUSH TO 300 FEET HIGH AND GROW ANYWHERE--DESERTS RAIN FORESTS, SWAMPS, CLAY SOIL.

THEN THERE'S ALL THE MARSUPIALS INCLUDING CARNIVORES, HERBIVORES AND OMNIVORES
WE HAVE TO THROW OUT ALL OUR PRE CONCEPTIONS AND START WITH A CLEAN SLATE


AYERS ROCK A MONOLITH IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CONTINENT
1100 FEET HIGH ONE-AND A HALF MILES LONG ABOUT ONE MILE WIDE - A SINGLE, GIGANTIC ROCK

MOUNT OLGA
WAVE ROCK
WOW! THAT'S REALLY INCREDIBLE!
HAD CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE FOR SOMEONE WHO HAD NEVER SEEN A TV-- HAD NO PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF IT--WHEN THEY FIRST HEARD OF IT? WHAT WOULD THEY THINK IT WOULD BE LIKE?
JEEZ, I DUNNO... uh NAH I WON'T EVEN TRY! YA HA HA
THAT FIGURES YOU'RE THE CHILD OF A CIVILIZATION THAT ALREADY HAD TV
I HAVE A FEELING MY FATHER THOUGHT AUSTRALIA WAS THE MOST FITTING PLACE FOR EGOS

I'VE LEARNED A FEW THINGS TOO. YOU'RE AN ORANGUTAN—RIGHT PAL? —AND YOU AREN'T FROM AUSTRALIA, SUMATRA, OR BORNEO, EH?
Ikk! Ook!

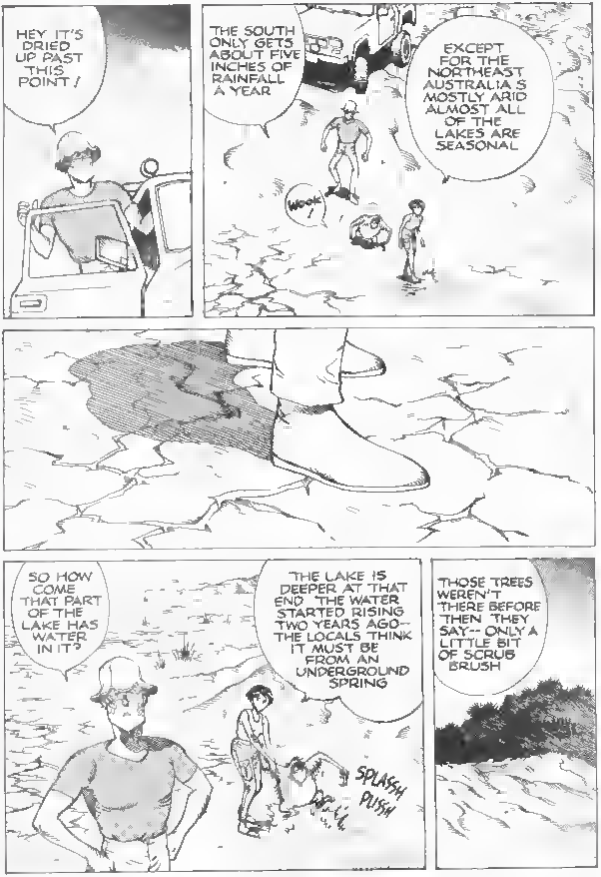
I WAS IN PALEMBANG ON SUMATRA, AND STOPPED INTO A FORTUNE TELLER'S SHOP PRETTY MUCH ON A WHIM.
FORTUNE TELLER

I AM FATED TO DIE IN A SUDDEN ACCIDENT ON THE MORROW

ACTUALLY I GOT PUNKY WHEN I WAS BACKPACKING AROUND THE WORLD A FEW YEARS AGO

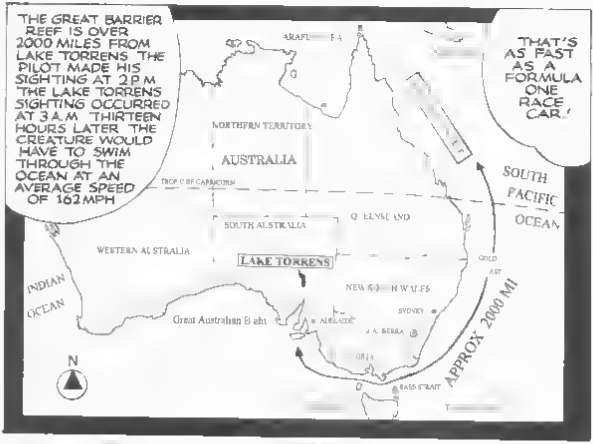
THE SPIRITS HAVE TOLD ME TO ENTRUST MY LITTLE FRIEND HERE TO MY LAST CUSTOMER TONIGHT...
OOK!
HE'S THE CHILD OF AN ORANGUTAN I BEFRIENDED WHILE I WAS LIVING AS A HERMIT DEEP IN THE JUNGLE BUT SHE DIED DURING CHILDBIRTH... HE'S NOW ALMOST ONE YEAR OLD.
TAKE HIM WHEN YOU'VE LOST YOUR WAY HE WILL BE A SOURCE OF STRENGTH AND COURAGE FOR YOU.
BUT HOW...
BONGG BONGG
RRMMBB
OH MY GOD! AN EARTH-QUAKE!
WHDD
FORTUNE 5 RUPIAH
PALM READING 20 RUPIAH
OOK! (KK!)
SHE SHE WAS RIGHT

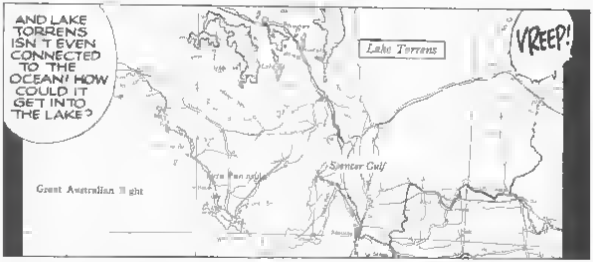
HOW D YOU MANAGE TO GET HIM OUT OF THE COUNTRY? AREN'T ORANGUTANS AN ENDANGERED SPECIES?
TONK TONK
HOO! HOO!
DAD HAS HAD A LOT OF GOVERNMENT CONNECTIONS HE FIXED IT FOR ME
SAY IF EGOS ISN'T GONNA MAKE A MOVE SHOULDN'T WE? WHAT'S THE RANGE OF YOUR SCANNER?
ABOUT HALF A MILE
SO HOW BIG IS THIS LAKE TORRENS?
A TRIP ALL THE WAY AROUND WOULD ALMOST BE LIKE TRAVELING FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO LOS ANGELES!
HOLY COW!
N
DON'T WORRY
LAKE TORRENS
AREA 22 8 SQ MI
CURRENT POSITION
FORT AUGUSTA
LAKE GAIRDNER
LAKE MACFARLANE
VRMMM


HEY IT'S DRIED UP PAST THIS POINT!
THE SOUTH ONLY GETS ABOUT FIVE INCHES OF RAINFALL A YEAR
EXCEPT FOR THE NORTHEAST AUSTRALIA'S MOSTLY ARID ALMOST ALL OF THE LAKES ARE SEASONAL
WOOF!
SO HOW COME THAT PART OF THE LAKE HAS WATER IN IT?
THE LAKE IS DEEPER AT THAT END THE WATER STARTED RISING TWO YEARS AGO-- THE LOCALS THINK IT MUST BE FROM AN UNDERGROUND SPRING
SPLASH
PUSH
THOSE TREES WEREN'T THERE BEFORE THEN THEY SAY-- ONLY A LITTLE BIT OF SCRUB BRUSH

WOOK! YEEK!
TEAM A HERE RIGHT NOW THEY'RE LETTING THE APE PLAY IN THE MUD PUDDLES
SPARE ME THE DETAILS FOOL! I CAN SEE FOR MYSELF!
Y-YES, SIR!

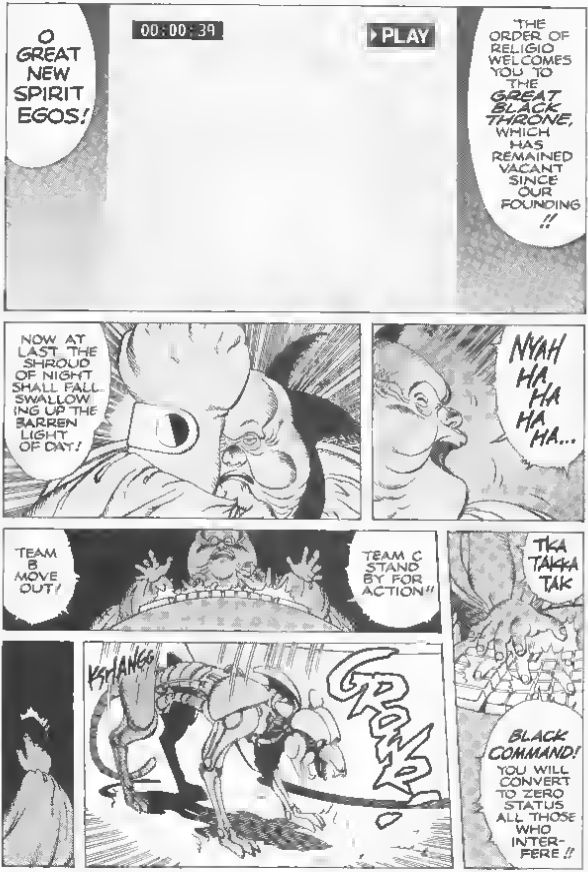
VRRM
VRRM
DID YOU CONFIRM THE GREAT BARRIER REEF REPORT?
WE'VE FOUND THE COAST GUARD HELO PILOT WHO MADE THE SIGHTING YOUR HONOR!
HE TRACKED IT FOR THREE MINUTES. IT WAS ABOUT FIVE METERS LONG WITH A DORSAL FIN PROTRUDING FROM THE WATER. HE SAYS BASED ON WHAT HE SAW HE THINKS IT WAS SOME KIND OF SHARK
HAVE YOU FINISHED ANALYZING THE HOLO GRAPHIC DATA TAKEN AT LAKE TORRENS?
KIME
Y-YESSIR uh WE AREN'T DONE YET BUT IT'S DEFINITELY A LIFE FORM THAT'S NEVER BEEN SIGHTED ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD!
TAKKA TAKKA
VPEEP!

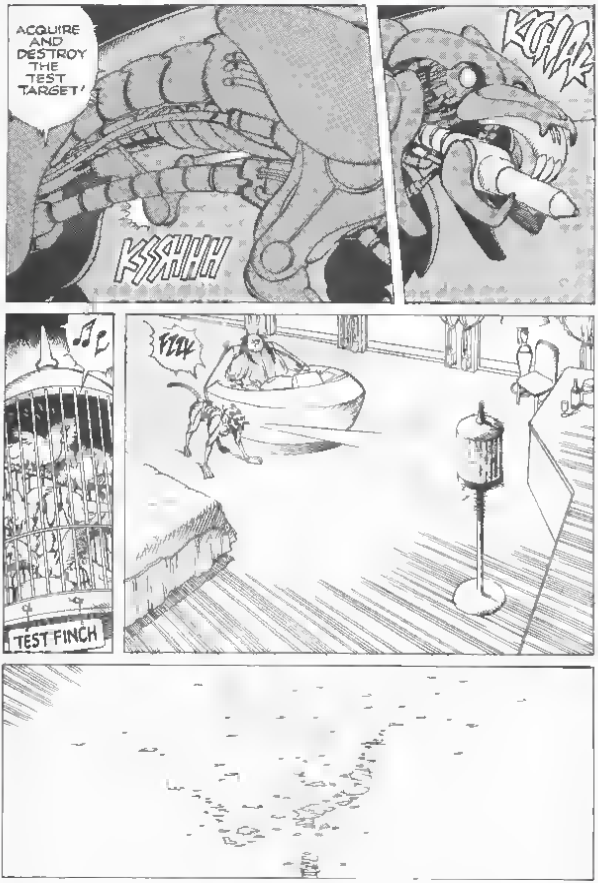

THE GREAT BARRIER REEF IS OVER 2000 MILES FROM LAKE TORRENS. THE PILOT MADE HIS SIGHTING AT 2 P.M. THE LAKE TORRENS SIGHTING OCCURRED AT 3 A.M. THIRTEEN HOURS LATER. THE CREATURE WOULD HAVE TO SWIM THROUGH THE OCEAN AT AN AVERAGE SPEED OF 162 MPH
THAT'S AS FAST AS A FORMULA ONE RACE CAR!
NORTHERN TERRITORY
AUSTRALIA
SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
QUEENSLAND
WESTERN AUSTRALIA
LAKE TORRENS
INDIAN OCEAN
Great Australian Bight
SYDNEY
APPROX. 2000 MI
N

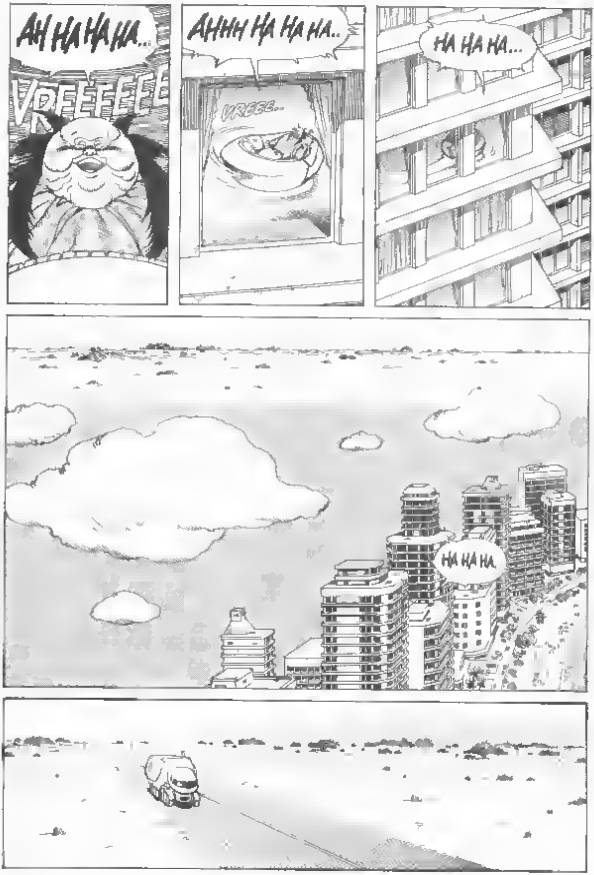

AND LAKE TORRENS ISN'T EVEN CONNECTED TO THE OCEAN! HOW COULD IT GET INTO THE LAKE?
Lake Torrens
VREEP!
Spencer Gulf
Great Australian Bight

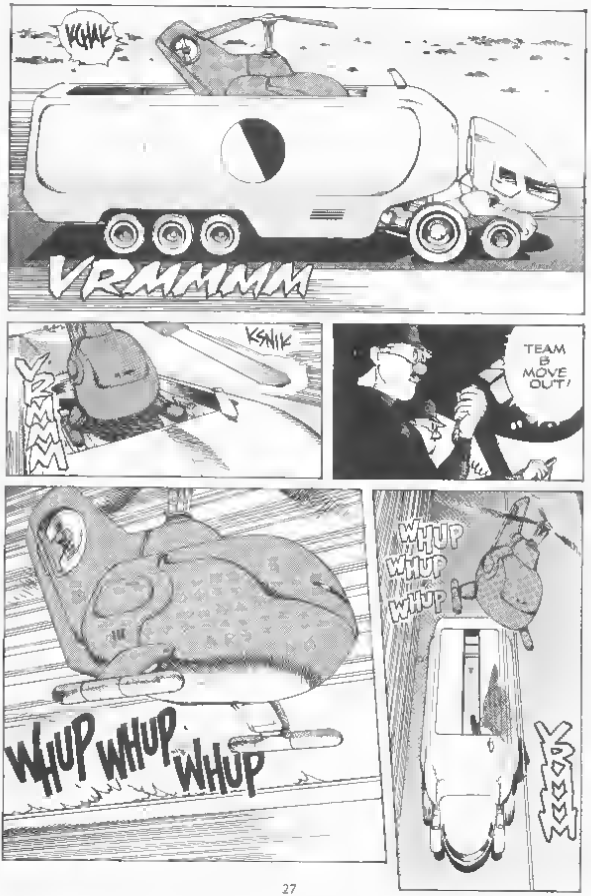
IT RARELY HAPPENS BUT APPARENTLY LAKE TORRENS DOES OVER-FLOW INTO THE SPENCER GULF DURING THE RAINY SEASON
BUT RIGHT NOW THE LAKE IS ALMOST COMPLETELY DRY EXCEPT AT THE SOUTH END VERY ODD

BY THE WAY DR UKIME, THAT RASH ON YOUR FACE LOOKS LIKE IT'S GETTING WORSE YOU KNOW THAT TWO OF THE FIVE RESEARCHERS ON THE BIOCHIP DEVELOPMENT PROJECT DIED A HORRIBLE DEATH WHEN THEY WERE SPRAYED WITH THAT BLUE SUBSTANCE BY EGOS!!
I-I'M STILL OKAY, BUT PLEASE FIND EGOS QUICKLY BLACK ECHO, YOUR HONOR!
IF WE CAN PERFORM BIOLOGICAL STUDIES ON EGOS
IT SHOULD HELP US FIND AN ANTIDOTE!!
THEN YOU'D BETTER SPEED UP YOUR ANALYSIS
THE SOONER THE ORDER OF RELIGIO CAN ACCESS EGOS, THE BETTER!
TAK
VREEEE
GRRR!
Y-YES YOUR HO-
ZZT!
HOLOGRAPHY DATA: 01


O GREAT NEW SPIRIT EGOS!
00:00:39
PLAY
THE ORDER OF RELIGIO WELCOMES YOU TO THE GREAT BLACK THRONE, WHICH HAS REMAINED VACANT SINCE OUR FOUNDING !!
NOW AT LAST THE SHROUD OF NIGHT SHALL FALL SWALLOWING UP THE BARREN LIGHT OF DAY!
NYAH HA HA HA HA...
TEAM B MOVE OUT!
TEAM C STAND BY FOR ACTION!!
TKA TAKKA TAK
BLACK COMMAND! YOU WILL CONVERT TO ZERO STATUS ALL THOSE WHO INTERFERE !!
KSHANGG
GOAR


ACQUIRE AND DESTROY THE TEST TARGET'
KSSHHH
KCHK
♫
TEST FINCH
FZZL


AH HA HA HA...
VREEEEE!
AHHH HA HA HA...
VREEE...
HA HA HA...
HA HA HA.


KCHAK
VRMMMM
VRMM
KSNIK
TEAM B MOVE OUT!
WHUP WHUP WHUP
WHUP WHUP WHUP
KCHKKK

WELL WE'VE SPENT HALF A DAY COVERING ALL SEVEN MILES OF SHORELINE ALONG THE FLOODED PART OF THE LAKE AND NOT A BLIP ON THE SCANNER
ALL THAT'S LEFT IS TO CHECK OUT THE MIDDLE OF THE LAKE
Ook!
HERE'S THE PADDLE HAP
THIS REALLY SUCKS WHAT'LL I DO IF I GET ATTACKED OUT THERE ?
IT DIDN'T ATTACK US LAST NIGHT DID IT?
YEAH BUT IT'S KILLING HORSES COWS KANGAROOS
WE STILL DON'T KNOW IF EGOS IS THE CULPRIT
CHIK-O
THIS IS THE ACTIVE PART OF THE SCANNER IT'S SELF-POWERED WITH A BUILT-IN TRANSMITTER I'VE SET ITS PARAMETERS TO IGNORE ANYTHING SMALLER THAN THE EGOS IT'LL START BLINKING IF IT PICKS SOMETHING UP

SMAK SMAK
WELL HERE GOES! WISH ME LUCK!
I'LL KEEP TRYING TO CONTACT EGOS FROM HERE!
SPLSSH SPLSSH
ANCHORS AWEIGH, ME BOYS!
WOOK! WOOK!!
BEEP!
IT'S FROM MR. OSAWAGI IN TOKYO!
RECEIVE MODE
INTERNET EMAIL:
SHIRO OSAWAGI

BEEP!

Daar Eike:

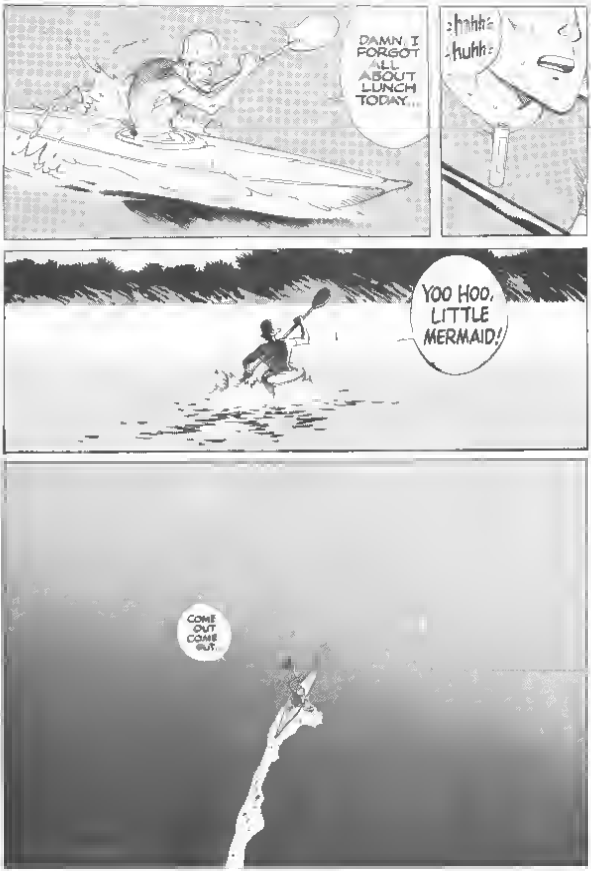
Reliable sources tell me that several go[illegible] agents are on their way to Australia. They are apparen[illegible]ng some sort of action, so please take adequate precautions.

I am currently analyzing the results of new data added to my simulation program for Egas' development.
Now, you must understand that the following is an inference, but I believe it to be true.

Your father, Dr. Higure, does indeed live on!!

BEEP
BEEP
BEEP

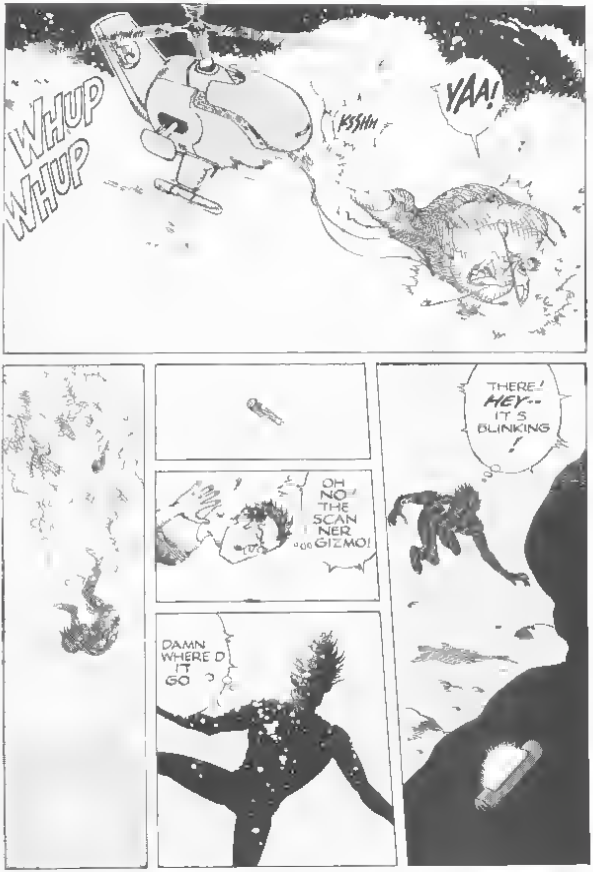
Your father, Dr. Higura, does indeed live on!
After inputting the new data I gave the batch file to a friend of mine at the university. We will execute the program on the mainframe sometime in the next three days.
I am about to depart for Australia, so I'll download the results from there.
Regards;
Osawa>

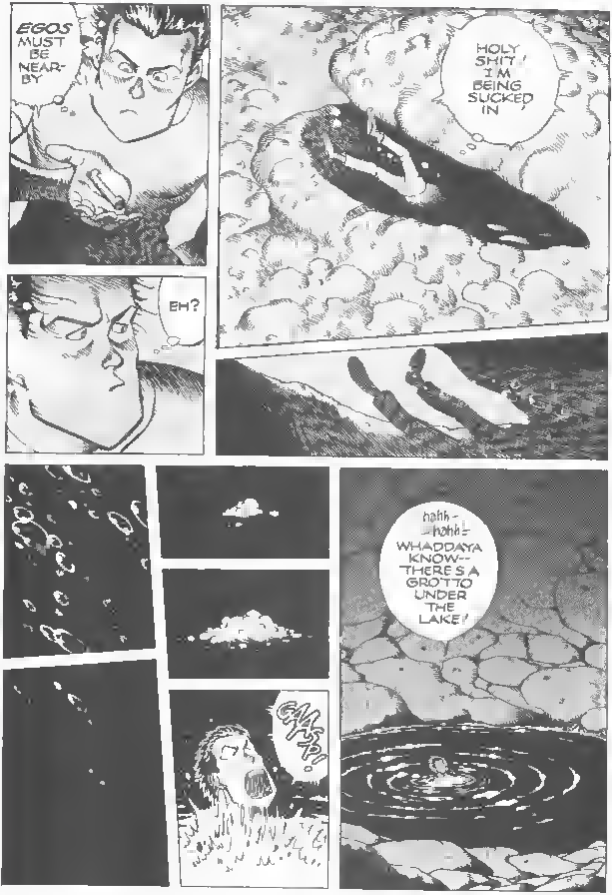


TO BE CONTINUED

VERSION 1.4
by Hisashi Sakaguchi

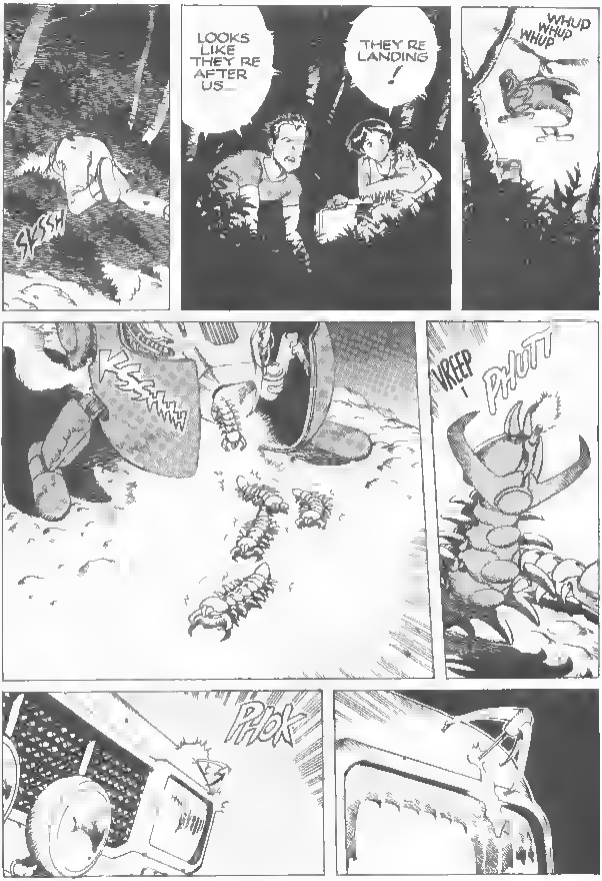
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHAT ON EARTH ?!
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHAT TH--HEY! GET AWAY FROM ME! SHOO! SHOO!
KCHAK


WHUP WHUP
SSHH
YAA!
OH NO! THE SCANNER GIZMO!
DAMN WHERE'D IT GO
THERE! HEY-- IT'S BLINKING!


EGOS MUST BE NEAR-BY
HOLY SHIT! I'M BEING SUCKED IN
EH?
GAAS?!
hahh-
-hohh-
WHADDAYA KNOW-- THERE'S A GROTTO UNDER THE LAKE!

VERSION!
VERSION !?!
WHOA! I FORGOT ABOUT EIKO!
BLOSSHH
!!HAHH!!
HEY!! EIII-KOHN!

-hahh-
-huhh-
-huhh-
-hahh-
EIKO OH NO
WHUP WHUP WHUP
URK!
HAP! OVER HERE!
Whewww... YOU'RE SAFE
WHUP WHUP

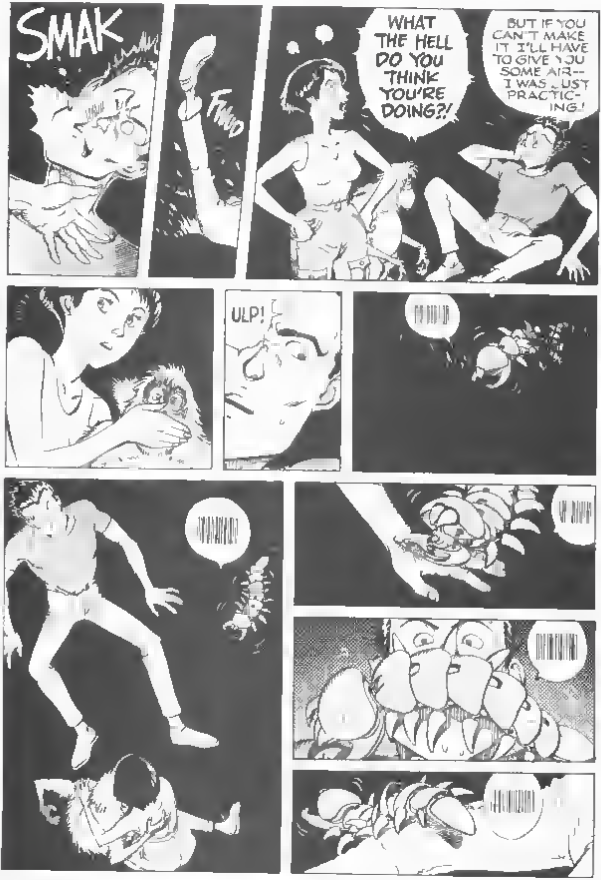

SKSSSH
LOOKS LIKE THEY RE AFTER US...
THEY RE LANDING!
WHUP WHUP WHUP
KSSHHH
VKEEP
PJUTT
PHOK

Y-WHAT THE HELL? LOOKS LIKE SOME KINDA POISON DART
LOOKS LIKE A CENTI PEDE
THEY'RE COMING! MOVE!
DO YOU HAVE THE IR SCANNER?
RIGHT HERE!
LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE GETTING CLOSER
BUT THEY AREN'T GIVING OFF MUCH IN THE WAY OF HEAT SO
DAMN THINGS
THEY WENT STRAIGHT FOR THE TRUCK THEY MUST HAVE SOME KINDA SENSOR!
NOISE MAYBE I LEFT THE ENGINE RUNNING BUT IT COULD BE HEAT TOO
SO THEY'RE SPOND TO ONE OR THE OTHER AND ATTACK EM?

HUH— THEY GAVE UP—
BUT THEY MIGHT COME BACK!

GREAT VIEW FROM HERE
HUH? THEY'RE MOVING ROCKS AROUND ON THE BEACH
LOOK! SOME THING ELSE IS COMING!
VRRN
VRRN
IT'S SOME KINDA BIG HELO!
THEY'RE ALL WEARING THOSE STRANGE GOGGLES WHO ARE THEY ANYWAY?

VRRRN
SAY-- WHILE YOU WERE GONE I GOT A MESSAGE FROM OSAWA@! SAYING GOVERNMENT AGENTS ARE HEADED THIS WAY--BUT THERE'S NO WAY THEY COULD HAVE GOTTEN HERE SO QUICKLY!
WELL WHOEVER THEY ARE THEY'RE NOT ON OUR SIDE
HEY! LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF SUBMERSIBLE!
THEY MUST'A COME TO CAPTURE EGOS! WE'VE GOTTA DO SOMETHING-- THEY MIGHT FIND YOUR DAD'S HIDEOUT!
HIS WHAT?!
WGHK
EIKO! CAN YOU HOLD YOUR BREATH FOR ONE MINUTE?
I'M NOT SURE WHY?
BECAUSE WE'RE GONNA GO DIVING
MMFF..


SMAK
FWIP
WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
BUT IF YOU CAN'T MAKE IT I'LL HAVE TO GIVE YOU SOME AIR-- I WAS JUST PRACTICING!
ULP!

WAK
WROK
IS IT DEAD?
I GUESS THEY RESPOND TO SOUND
FZZK KZZK
WE BETTER GET OUT OF HERE!
VSSHHH
Mmm
WAIT! THE LAPTOP'S WATERPROOF BUT PUNKY CAN'T SWIM!
ALL RIGHT YOU TWO FREEZE!
!

KREEEE
WHUDD
YAA!
IT'S NOW OR NEVER!
PUNK!
KBLOOSH
WOOK
JEEZUS!
THAT'S THEM!
DON'T SHOOT! TAKE THEM ALIVE!

VREEEE
BLACK SPHERE UNDER WAY!
BLSSH BLSSH
EIKO! BREATHE AS DEEP AS YOU CAN!
NOW DIVE!
GCHAK!

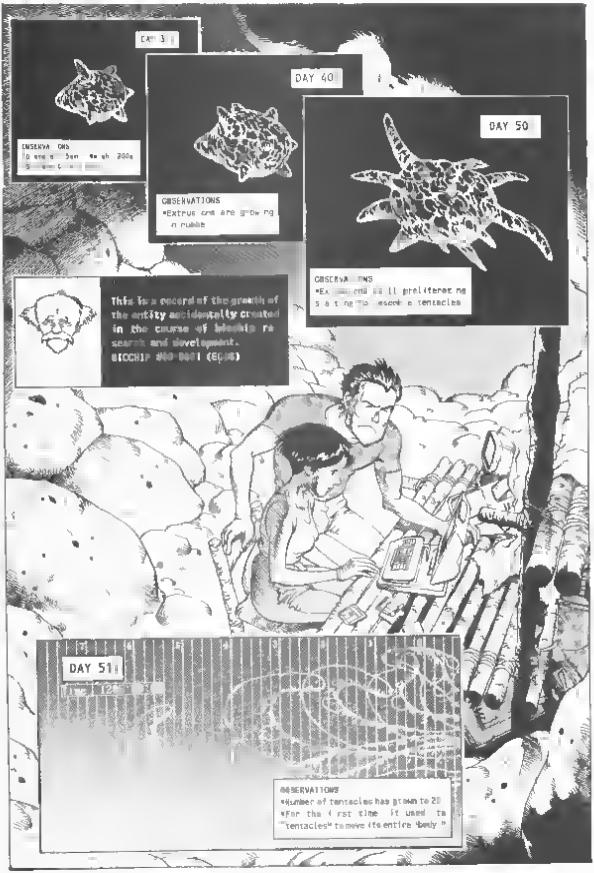
AFTER THEM! DIVE!!

WHERE THE HELL ARE THEY?!
THEY CAN'T HOLD THEIR BREATH FOR-EVER
VERSION
hahh huhh- -hurhh -hahh- hff
FATHER
DR. HIGURE hahh LIVED HERE huhh- HOW THE HELL'D HE hnfff- FIND THIS PLACE ANYWAY
ADAMIAK
-huhh- MUST A FOUND IT BEFORE THE -haff WATER STARTED FILLING THE LAKE -hahh- YOU THINK?

HERE'S HIS BED...
BUT IT'S ODD
IF THIS PLACE WERE SEALED OFF WE COULD BE BELOW THE LAKE BOTTOM.
BEEP
AN ANTENNA CABLE ?
BUT THERE'S FRESH AIR HERE IF AIR CAN ENTER FROM OUTSIDE THEN WATER PRESSURE SHOULD HAVE FILLED THE PLACE UP WITH THE WATER
WATER PRESSURE
I CAN SEE LIGHT FROM THE OUTSIDE!
I'VE GOT IT! REMEMBER THAT SMALL ISLAND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAKE - WE MUST BE INSIDE!

SO THE WATER LEVEL HERE IS ACTUALLY EVEN WITH THE LAKE SURFACE!
NO--
--2ck
--KIDDIN'
OWW
A COMPUTER! THIS MUST BE WHERE FATHER TYPED HIS LAST MESSAGE THE DAY BEFORE THEY FOUND HIM BY THE LAKE!
THE BATTERY'S DEAD
WHAT ARE THESE?
DISKETTES!
FILE 2
FILE A1
FILE A 2
I WONDER IF THEY RE COM-PATIBLE WITH MY LAPTOP!

But if that is you, Eiko—
enter the month and day
when your dear departed
mother and I first met
>MONTH:
DAY:
>MONTH: 2
DAY: 14
THEY MET ON VALEN TINE'S DAY HUH CUTE!
EGOS DEVELOPMENT
RECORD FILE A-1 131.1
IT WORKED !!
TWENTY MINUTES HAVE PASSED AND THEY STILL HAVEN'T SUR-FACED—
7.25m
THERE'S SOME IRREGULARITY IN THE CURRENT NEAR THE CREVICE IN THAT ROCK DEAD AHEAD!
BETTER CHECK IT OUT!
BOSH


DAY 40
OBSERVATIONS
•Extrusions are growing in number
DAY 50
OBSERVATIONS
•Existing and additional protrusions are starting to resemble tentacles
This is a record of the growth of the entity accidentally created in the course of biochip research and development.
BIOCHIP MOD-B001 (EQUUS)
DAY 51
OBSERVATIONS
•Number of tentacles has grown to 20
•For the first time it used its "tentacles" to move its entire "body"

*Now it's running around like a puppy

MEMO
★Sometimes it really does act like a puppy…

DAY 60
STUDY TIME——
Today it accessed art museum catalog data…

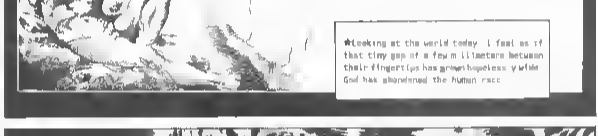
[Egos has a study learned how a human uses a computer to access data banks and fetch information. It has reproduced the same system internally and can perform direct access. I can see both process from my computer.]

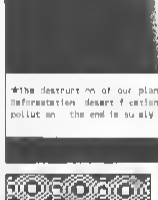
*Egos encountered one painting that apparently made a deep impression on it. At any rate, it rescanned the picture over and over.

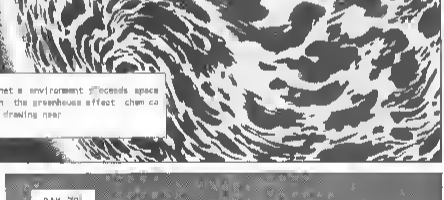
*The painting was Michelangelo's "The Creation of Adam" which covers part of the Sistine Chapel ceiling.

MEMO
*It shows the instant when God gave life to Adam from the tip of his finger

*Looking at the world today, I feel as if that tiny gap of a few millimeters between their fingertips has grown hopelessly wide. God has abandoned the human race.


*The destruction of our planet's environment exceeds space deforestation, desertification, the greenhouse effect, chemical pollution, the end is surely drawing near.

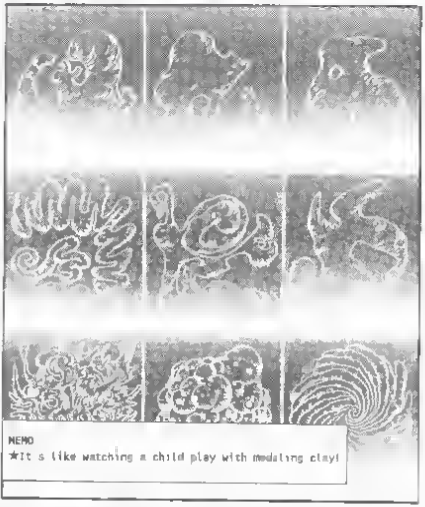

*But I digress.
I wonder what it was that Esau learned from that painting ?


DAY 70
OBSERVATIONS
*Number of tentacles remains unchanged at twenty
*It has stopped moving around
*Spinning time and speed both increasing

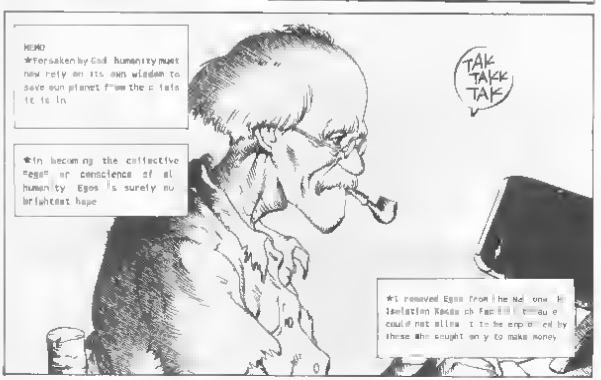
MEMO
★By stepping at twenty tentacles, is it emulating the number of fingers and toes on a human being ???
OBSERVATIONS
★Now it lies perfectly still in the corner, just like a melancholy child or a sick puppy…
MEMO
★The other day I had finished processing some data, and without thinking—
KLIK
"E-gos"
★I typed its name… Then—
BEEP
HELLO.
I AM EGOS.
I LOVE AND RESPECT YOU VERY MUCH.
★It was the first time Egos had replied to me. This touched me deeply, but I found what it was extremely unsettling.
Y-YEAH I'LL BET

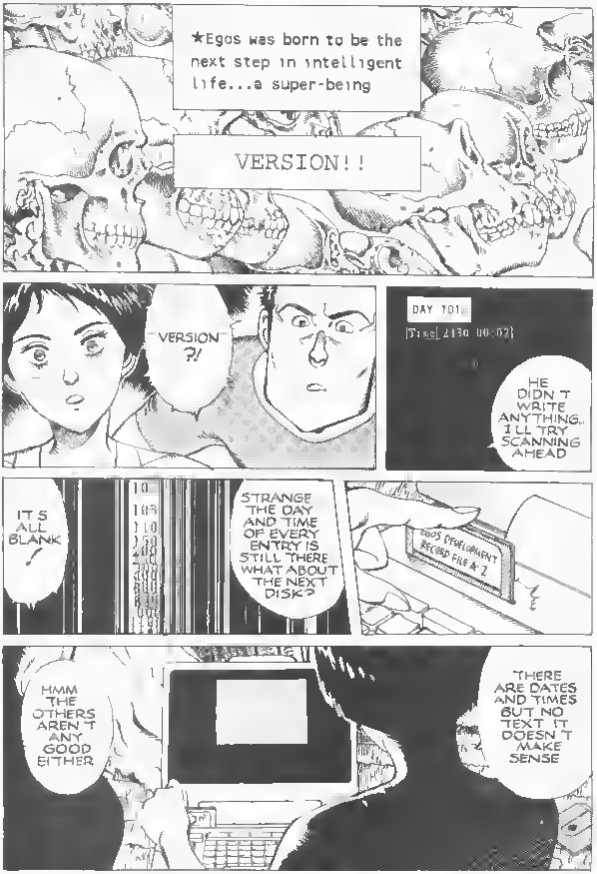
OBSERVATIONS

* 00 days have passed now
the
nine ate
duct on has
•Concept
hasn't
* I
begun
ene



MEMO
★It s like watching a child play with modeling clay!


MEMO
★Forsaken by God humanity must now rely on its own wisdom to save our planet from the p lists it is in
★In becoming the collective regain of conscience of al humanity Egos is surely no brightest hope
TAK TAKK TAK
★I removed Egos from the Nat one H Isolation Kaoss ch Fac e could not allow it to be exp ed by those who sought only to make money

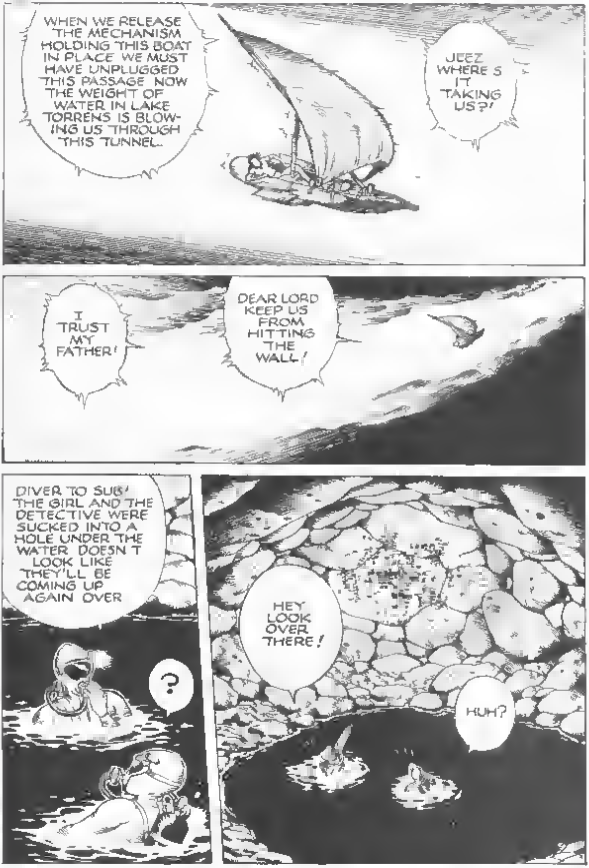

★Egos was born to be the next step in intelligent life...a super-being
VERSION!!
VERSION ?!
DAY 101
[Time] 2130 00:07
HE DIDN'T WRITE ANYTHING.. I'LL TRY SCANNING AHEAD
IT'S ALL BLANK
STRANGE THE DAY AND TIME OF EVERY ENTRY IS STILL THERE WHAT ABOUT THE NEXT DISK?
EGOS DEVELOPMENT RECORD FILE A-Z
HMM THE OTHERS AREN'T ANY GOOD EITHER
THERE ARE DATES AND TIMES BUT NO TEXT IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE

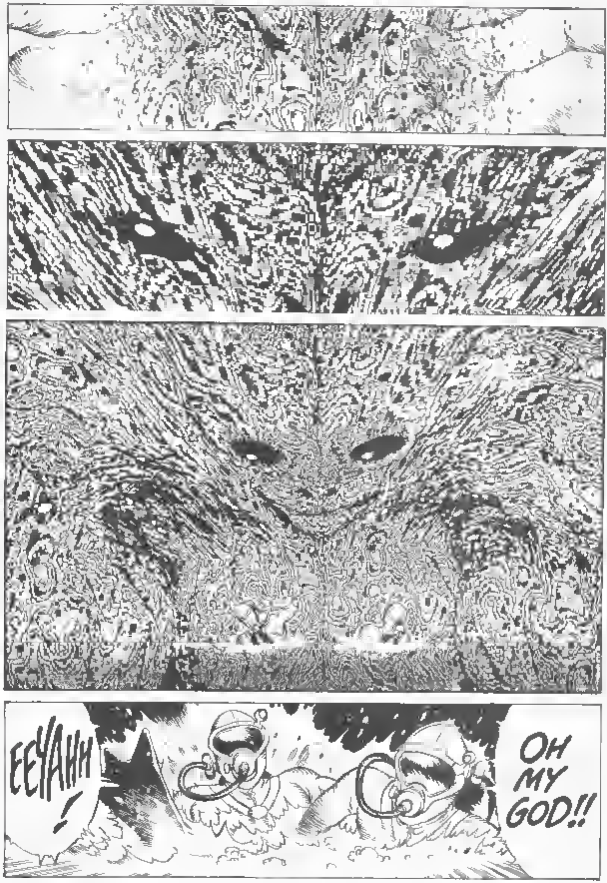
BODY DEVELOPMENT RECORD FILE A 3
SOMEBODY ERASED ALL OF THE TEXT
BUT WHO ?!
DR HIGURE WOULDN'T HAVE
NO ONE BESIDES ME COULD POSSIBLY KNOW THE PASSWORD TO ACCESS AND DECRYPT THE FILES. IT MUST BE SOMEONE CAPABLE OF DECIPHERING ANY PASSWORD OR SOMETHING!!
EGOS !!
BUT WHY ?!
I DON'T KNOW
HUH?

THEY FOLLOWED US!
SHIT! THERE'S NO PLACE TO HIDE!
WHAT'S THIS?
EMERGENCY ESCAPE ROUTE
RIVER OF MIST
RIVER OF MIST?
WORTH A TRY!
UHNF!
CHINK
EEP!
SKRASSH
LOOKS LIKE A SAILBOAT
DO YOU SUPPOSE THERE'S A WAY OUT THEN?

KBLOSSH
NOW WHAT'LL WE DO?!
THEY'RE HERE!!
YOW! THERE'S A WEIGHT ATTACHED!
BLOOSH!
?!
?!

WHOAAA!
-blb-
FWAP
WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON?!
LIKE THE SIGN SAID— IT'S A "RIVER OF MIST / WATER SPRAY BEING BLOWN WITH INCREDIBLE FORCE"


WHEN WE RELEASE THE MECHANISM HOLDING THIS BOAT IN PLACE WE MUST HAVE UNPLUGGED THIS PASSAGE NOW THE WEIGHT OF WATER IN LAKE TORRENS IS BLOWING US THROUGH THIS TUNNEL..
JEEZ WHERE S IT TAKING US?!
I TRUST MY FATHER!
DEAR LORD KEEP US FROM HITTING THE WALL!
DIVER TO SUB! THE GIRL AND THE DETECTIVE WERE SUCKED INTO A HOLE UNDER THE WATER DOESN T LOOK LIKE THEY'LL BE COMING UP AGAIN OVER
?
HEY LOOK OVER THERE!
HUH?



TO BE CONTINUED!

VERSION 1.5

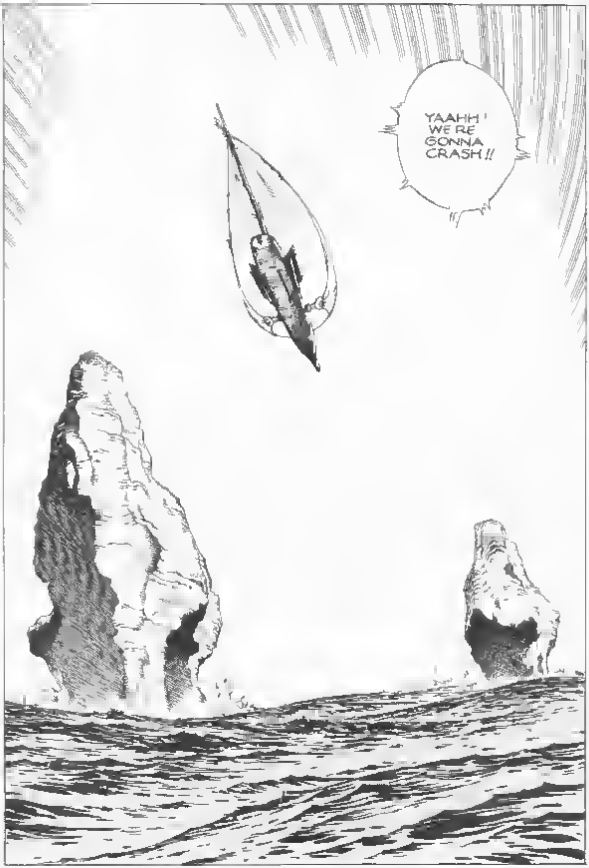
by Hisashi Sakaguchi

WHAT HAPPENED ? ANSWER ME !!
EH ? BUBBLES...?
HEY LOOK ! THAT ISLAND'S CRUMBL-ING !
RMBBRMBB
IT'S SINKING INTO THE LAKE !

TEAMS A AND B! ACTIVE RADAR AND SONAR!
WHERE'S THE EGOS?! YOU MUST FIND IT!!
WE AREN'T PICKING UP ANY SIGN OF IT ON THE SENSOR SUITE
00.1
T4!
TAK!
YOU CALLED O BLACK ECHO, SIR?
WE RE CHECKING OUT OF THIS HOTEL!

TO THE GREAT BARRIER REEF!!
VRMMM
THIS SURE IS A LONG TRIP— DAMN NOISY TOO!
I SEE LIGHT UP AHEAD!

WHSSH
WE'RE OUT!
YEEK!!
kSSHH


YAAHH! WE'RE GONNA CRASH!!

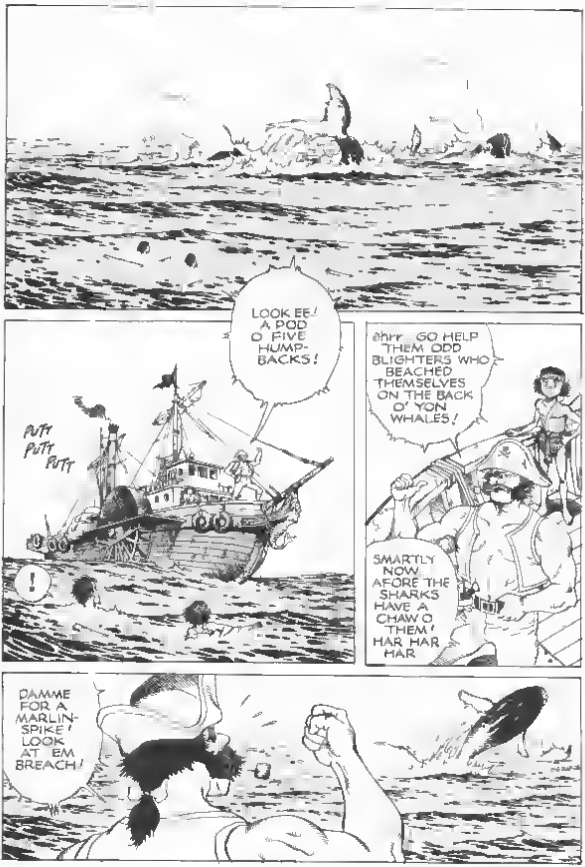
HEY! THE WEIGHTS FELL OFF!
KCHAK
WHDD
URK!
WHAT A VIEW! I HEARD YOUR DAD WAS A GENIUS— AND NOW I BELIEVE IT!
TO BUILD A BOAT LIKE THIS HE MUST'A BEEN A GENIUS!
YOU THINK THERE'S SHARKS DOWN THERE?

SH-SHARKS ?!
WHSSHH
DAMN IT-- NOW WHAT?! LAND'S BACK THE OTHER WAY!!
!?!
DAMN! HOW DO YOU STEER THIS THING?! I DON'T WANNA GET EATEN BY SHARKS!!
SKSSHH

WHERE ARE WE ANYWAY?
THIS MUST BE THE SPENCER GULF IN THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIGHT
I BET THAT TUNNEL WAS FORMED BY WATER DRAINING SOUTH FROM LAKE TORRENS INTO THE SPENCER GULF!
THAT "RIVER OF MIST" BLEW US A HELLUVA LONG WAY
I'M WORRIED ABOUT PUNKY
AW THAT LITTLE RASCAL'LL BE OKAY!
FWAP FWAP
WELL I GUESS WE'RE AT THE MERCY OF THE WIND NOW
NOT QUITE! LET'S SEE WHO SHOULD I CALL WITH AN SOS?
THE COM-PUTER!
HEH HEH HEH OF COURSE!
THAT TAKES ALL THE FUN OUT OF IT!
ACK! MUST BE A SHARK! WHERE IS IT? WE'RE DOOMED!
THAT'S STRANGE
EH?
WHO!

YAAHH!
BWHOOSHH

SPSSH


LOOK EE! A POD O FIVE HUMP-BACKS!
PUFF PUFF PUFF
!
ahrr GO HELP THEM ODD BLIGHTERS WHO BEACHED THEMSELVES ON THE BACK O' YON WHALES!
SMARTLY NOW AFORE THE SHARKS HAVE A CHAW O THEM! HAR HAR HAR
DAMME FOR A MARLIN-SPIKE! LOOK AT 'EM BREACH!

WHEWW THANKS !
THEM HUMP-BACKS ARE A RIGHT LIVELY LOT!
B GOD THEY RE DOING A FANCY BIT O LOBTAIL-ING
LOBTAILING" ?
"THAT'S WHEN THEY SLAP THE WATER WITH THEIR FLUKES..
SMAK!
LIKE THIS!
WHEN THE WIND S UP BELIKE IT STIRS THE WATER AN YON BEASTS BE HAVIN A HARD TIME TO TALK
WHALES CAN TALK ..?!
THEY MAKE SOUNDS IN THE FRONT OF THEIR HEADS SOMEHOW THAT S HOW THEY DO IT
THEY BE LOBTAILIN TER SEND SOME KIND OF TALK TO THEIR MATES OFF YONDER
AYE BLOODY LOT OF PODS AROUND HERE AND SINK ME IF THEY AIN T ALL HEADING NORTH
NORTH?
TO THE GREAT BARRIER REEF!
BLAST ME WHERE BE LUNCH?

YON HUMPBACKS USUALLY MIGRATE NORTH TO TH GREAT REEF ROUNDABOUT SPRING— AUGUST OR SEPTEMBER BY DAMN BUT THIS BE DECEMBER...
AND MARK YE THERE'S MORE THAT'S ODD OF LATE WHITE-SIDED DOLPHINS FROM FAR JAPAN AND BELUGA WHALES FROM TH FROZEN NORTHLANDS HAVE BEEN SIGHTED 'BOUT YON REEF TOO
AND DON'T FORGET THE MER-MAID!
HAR HAR HAR AYE FORGOT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING I DID!
M-MERMAID? HE'Y D YOU THINK
NEAR THE GREAT BARRIER REEF ?
DAMN YE FOUR OUR GUESTS SOME SQUID INK GROG!

UMM WHAT ARE THOSE THINGS IN IT?
DEVIL-FISH EYE BALLS!
DRINK UP AND WE'LL BE MATES FOR LIFE!
er AND IF WE DON'T ?
I'LL FEED YE TO THE SHARKS !!
GUESS WE'D BETTER DRINK IT
YEP!
HAR HAR HAR NOW WE'RE MATES! WELCOME ABOARD THE GOOD SHIP DEATH'S HEAD! TUCK INTO THE GRUB!
:gulp:
I BE CAP'N PEP!
:gulp:
hee hee
WHAT BE SO FUNNY ?!
THAT'S AN AWFULLY CUTE NAME FOR A PIRATE CAPTAIN!
YEAH! HAW HAW!

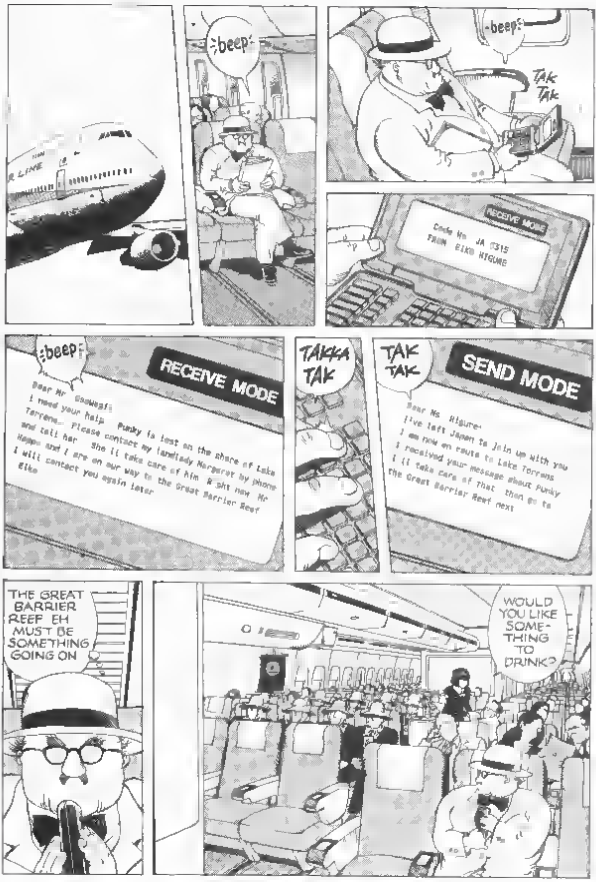
THUK
THOU GUTBUCKET DOGS! DAREST THOU LAUGH AT ME 'THE DEVIL OF THE HIGH SEAS?!
AHRRR CURSED BE MY LONG-GONE PARENTS, THEM WHAT GAVE ME THIS FOUL NAME
ENOUGH OF THAT! WHAT WERE YE AND THAT RUM BOAT OF YOURS DOING IN THESE HERE PARTS?
AND GI' IT TO ME STRAIGHT! I'M A BUSY MAN!
WELL IT'S KINDA A LONG STORY
YEAH BESIDES THIS BOAT'S PRETTY WEIRD TOO
kaff!
mnch mnch
WAP
ATLANTIC
OCEAN
SOUTH AMERICA
THE DEATH'S HEAD BE A SHIP, MATEY! NOT A BOAT! BAH! WHAT CARE I FOR THE TALES OF LAND-LUBBERS ANYWAY!
MYSELF I BE SAILIN' THE SEVEN SEAS! BYGOD, DAMME IF I CAN RECALL WHEN LAST I SET FOOT ON LAND
GUESS YOU DON'T GET SEASICK EH? urp!
I'VE BEEN CHOSEN TO BE THE EMPEROR O' THE SEAS!
HUH?!

LITTLE MORE THAN A YEAR PAST I WAS A PENNILESS FISHERMAN HAVIN LOST ALL ME MONEY GAMBELING. ONE DAY AS I WAS WONDERING HUNGRY ALONG THE BEACH I ATE SOME SEAWEED THE LIKE O' WHICH I'D NEVER SEEN
SUDDENLY BEFORE ME VERY EYES THERE APPEARED A BEAUTEOUS MAID SHE HAD SKIN WHITE AS MARBLE ABOVE BUT THE SCALES OF A FISH BELOW AYE AND SHE SPOKE TO ME
"IF THOU SHALL COME FOR ME IN A GREAT SHIP" SAITH SHE "I'LL SHOW THEE WHERE THE GOLDEN CONCH IS TO BE FOUND"
"THEN SHE SAID 'ENTER THOU THE LOTTERY AND CHOOSE THIS NUMBER' WRITING IT IN THE SAND AYE I HAD ME DOUBTS BUT I BOUGHT ME A TICKET AND WHAT D'YE KNOW?! 'TWAS THAT NUMBER WON THE JACKPOT!
A-123456

SINCE BUYING ME THIS FINE SHIP I'VE SAILED FORTY THOUSAND LEAGUES A SEARCHING FOR THAT MERMAID FISH!
BUT BY GOD'S BLOOD I'M SHOT THROUGH WITH TH FEELING I BE NEARIN MY GOAL AT LAST! HAR HAR HNN
WHDD
Gsnzz snorkk
TIME FOR THE LAPTAIN'S NAP
BET THIS IS SOME KIND OF SMUGGLING OPERATION—
NO! THIS IS NOT SMUG GLE BOAT!
GONGGG
THIS IS MAO, OUR ENGINEER AND COOK
初次见面,
HOW YOU DO!

CAPTAIN PEP! LITTLE BIT STRANGE YOU BET, BUT IT TRUE HE WAS FISHERMAN IN COPENHAGEN.
COPENHAGEN DENMARK? ISN'T THAT WHERE THE STATUE OF ANDERSEN'S LITTLE MERMAID IS?
ONE YEAR AGO WHEN HE WIN LOTTERY HE COME IN MY SHOP SO HAPPY DRINK TOO MUCH FALL DOWN AND HIT HEAD AFTER THAT HE START TALK ABOUT MERMAID
HE ASK ME CLOSE UP SHOP COME ALONG AS FIRST MATE
WHEN THE CAP FOUND ME I WAS WORKING IN A SOUVENIR SHOP ON KANGAROO ISLAND WHERE ALL THE SEA LIONS ARE!
I'M A FULL-BLOODED AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINE, I AM!
HYA!

WHSST!
NICE CATCH!
I MUST SAY YOU SURE ARE A SOCIABLE BUNCH!
THIS NOT BAD LIFE CAPTAIN PAY WELL AND FLOATING ON WAVES VERY RELAXING
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A MERMAID ARE YOU? WELL SO ARE WE! PLEASE TAKE US WITH YOU TO THE GREAT BARRIER REEF!
WHY YOU CRAZY TOO LIKE CAPTAIN?!
HUH?!

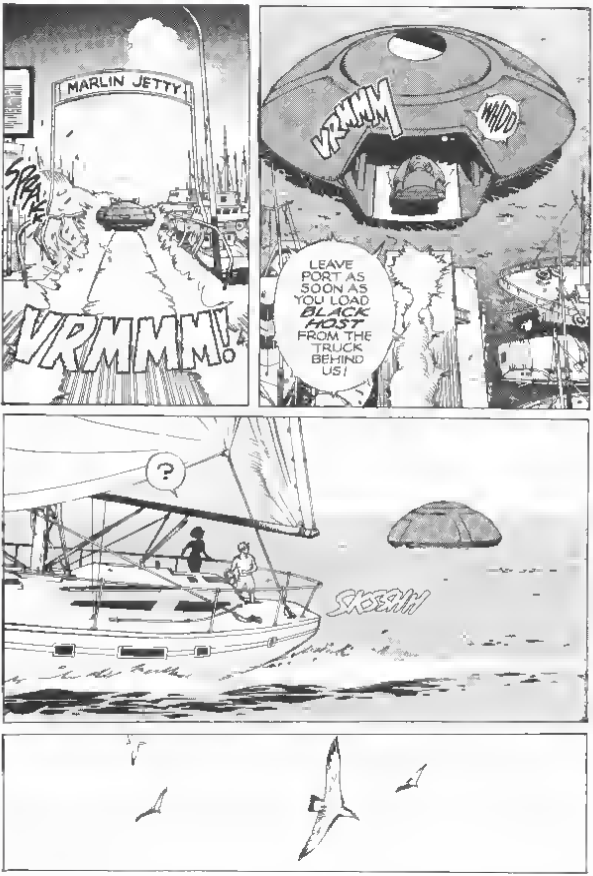

:beep:
:beep:
TAK TAK
RECEIVE MODE
Code No JA 7315
FROM ELKO MIGUIRE
:beep:
RECEIVE MODE
Dear Mr Goodwgfs
I need your help Punky is lost on the shore of Lake Torrens. Please contact my landlady Margaret by phone and tell her She'll take care of him Right now Mr Hopps and I are on our way to the Great Barrier Reef I will contact you again later
Elko
TAKKA TAK
TAK TAK
SEND MODE
Dear Mr Miguire
I've left Japan to join up with you I am now en route to Lake Torrens I received your message about Punky I'll take care of that then go to the Great Barrier Reef next
THE GREAT BARRIER REEF EH MUST BE SOMETHING GOING ON
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME-THING TO DRINK?

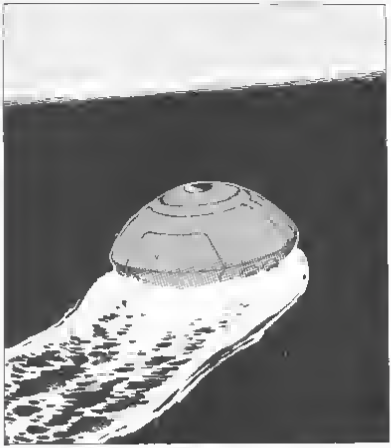
EXCUSE ME BUT WHO ARE THOSE QUIET FOLKS DOWN THERE?
THEY SAY THEY'RE FARMERS FROM A SMALL VILLAGE ON SHIKOKU ISLAND
BUT YOU KNOW I DON'T THINK THEY REALLY ARE. I'M FROM SHIKOKU MYSELF SO I TRIED GREETING THEM IN THE LOCAL DIALECT. I SAID "OSHOOO ZOI," BUT THEY ALL JUST STARED BACK AT ME
WHAT'S IT MEAN?
"HOW ARE YOU?
HMMM
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN WE ARE NOW APPROACHING ADELAIDE AIRPORT
農
VRMMM

FLAG "AGRICULTURAL CO OP"

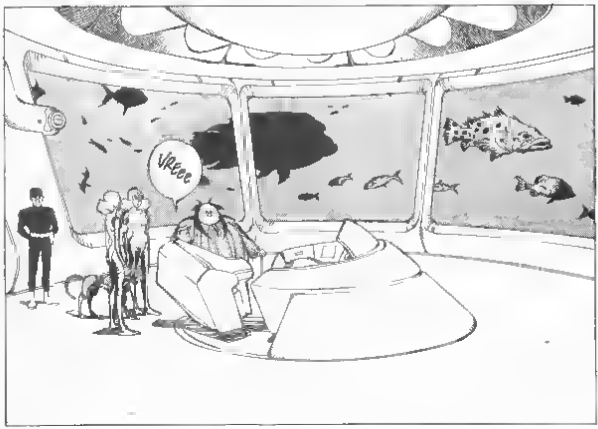
VRMMMMM
ONLY THREE MILES TO CAIRNS SIR
CAIRNS
TAKKA TAK TAK
BEEP
VREEP
BLACK SHOE REPORTING SIR
WE'VE SET UP THIRTY RADAR INSTALLATIONS ALONG THE AUSTRALIAN COAST AND ARE MONITORING ALL RIVERS AND THE OPEN SEA WITHIN A SIXTY-MILE RADIUS. ADDITIONALLY WE HAVE FIVE SPEEDBOATS AND THREE HELO PATROLLING THE ENTIRE 1,200-MILE STRETCH OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF.

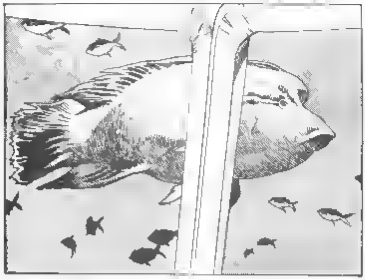
WE'VE ARRIVED SIR
BEEP
BLACK CIRCLE'S WAITING AT MARLIN JETTY
BEEP
Trinity Bay
Marlin Jetty
N
BAY ST.
CAR PARK
VRRMMM


MARLIN JETTY
VRMMM!
VRMMM
WHUD
LEAVE PORT AS SOON AS YOU LOAD BLACK HOST FROM THE TRUCK BEHIND US!
?
SKREEW

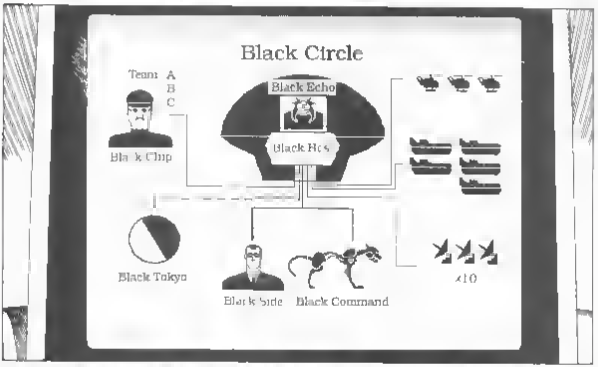


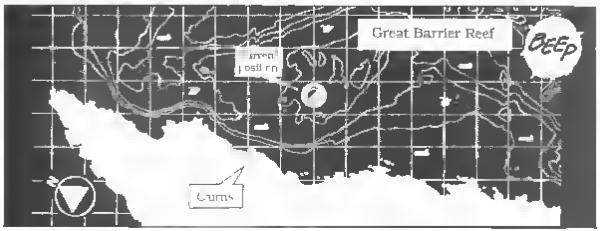
BLACK HOST IS NOW DOWNLINKED TO ALL SPEEDBOATS, HELOS AND RADAR REMOTES!


VReee

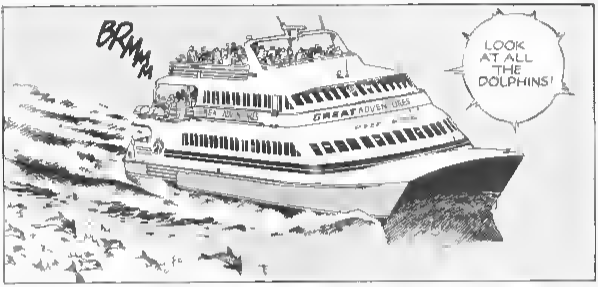


TAK
TAKK
TAK


Black Circle
Team A
B
C
Black Chip
Black Echo
Black Hcs
Black Tokyo
Black Side
Black Command
x10


Great Barrier Reef
OEEp
Cairns

OOOH!
WOW!


BRMM
LOOK AT ALL THE DOLPHINS!
GREAT ADVENTURES

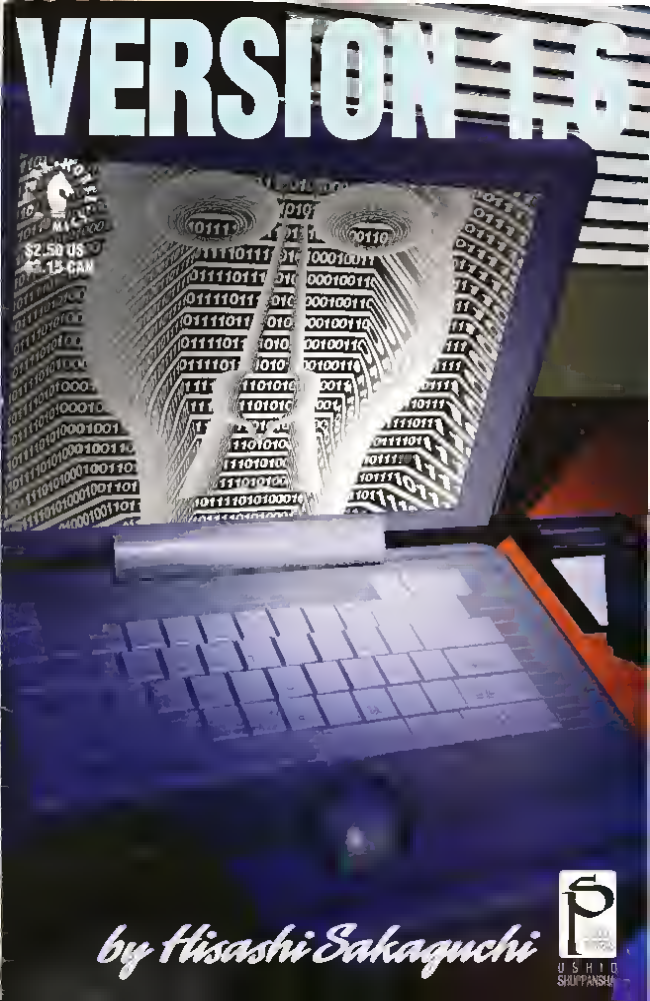
WOWww!

PUTT PUTT PUTT
FEELING BETTER ?
MY STOMACH S COMPLETELY EMPTY
:urp:
OOORG
CAP'N PEPI SAYS WE'LL REACH THE REEF IN ANOTHER COUPLE OF DAYS AROUND NOON
COUPLE OF DAYS ?
WHD
OORGG
AHOY! IT'S A SPERM WHALE !!
KBLOOSH
METHINKS HE BE HEADIN FOR THE REEF TOO!

ahhh, LOOK AT THEM ALL! THIS BE A GOOD OMEN, BY MY OATH!
THEY BE GATHERIN TO CELEBRATE THE CROWNING OF ME CAP'N PEPI AS EMPEROR OF THE SEA!
MAN THE CAP'S REALLY LOST IT HE SERIOUSLY THINKS HE'S GONNA MARRY THE MERMAID OR SOMETHING
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS ENGINE? SURE IS BIG
I TOLD YOU THIS WAS A SMUGGLER'S BOAT ALL THAT HORSEPOWER COMES IN HANDY WHEN MAKING QUICK GETAWAYS
-urp-
LOOK, THAT'S SO BEAU-TIFUL!

TO BE CONTINUED

VERSION 1.0

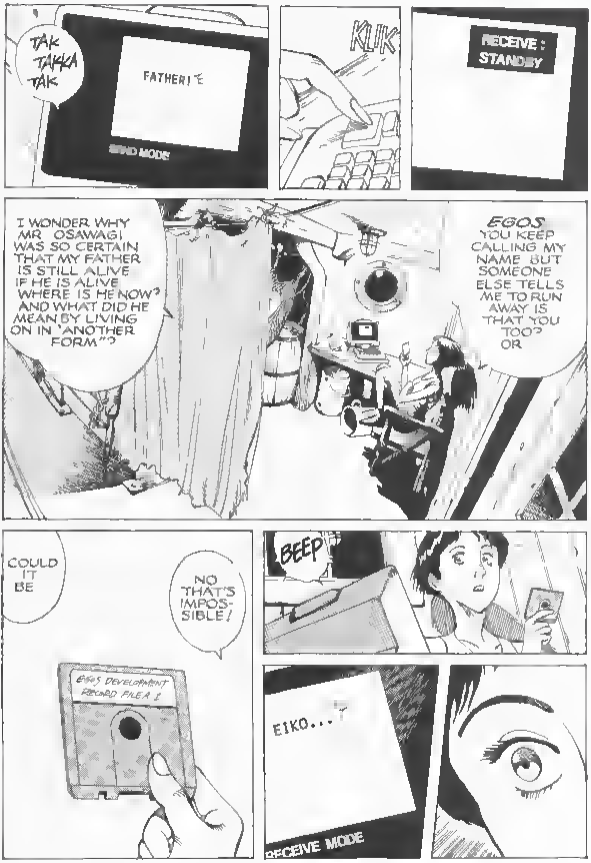


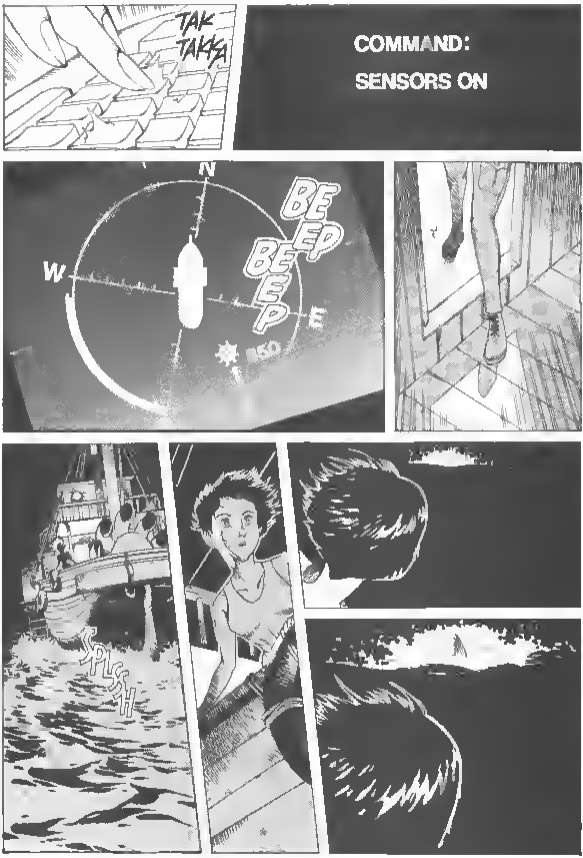
by Hisashi Sakaguchi

USHIO SHUPPANSHA

SPEEDBOAT ONE TO BLACK CIRCLE WE'RE SEEING A VERY STRANGE PHENOMENON HERE -
A HUGE GATHERING OF WHALES DOLPHINS SEA LIONS SEA OTTERS AND EVEN FUR SEALS FROM COLD-WATER REGIONS! THEY ALL SEEM TO BE CONVERGING ON THE BARRIER REEF!
THOSE ARE ALL FORMS OF MARINE MAMMAL LIFE VERY STRANGE INDEED

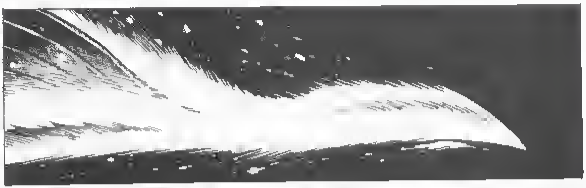
HELO TWO HERE THUNDER CLOUDS ARE APPROACHING FROM THE NORTH
LOW
WE'RE ALSO SEEING ANOMALOUS BEHAVIOR IN THE OCEAN CURRENTS
AND THE AIR TEMPERATURE IS DROPPING SHARPLY!
DOWN TO 77 DEGREES
74
70
65
62
IMPOSSIBLE! IT'S MIDSUMMER!!

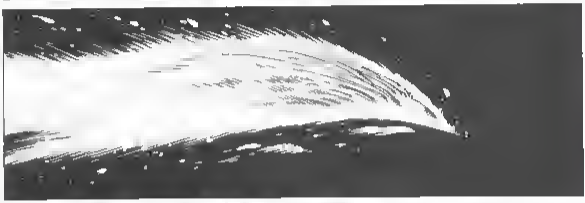

TAK TAKKA TAK
FATHER I'E
SEND MODE
KLIK
RECEIVE : STANDBY
I WONDER WHY MR OSAWAGI WAS SO CERTAIN THAT MY FATHER IS STILL ALIVE IF HE IS ALIVE WHERE IS HE NOW? AND WHAT DID HE MEAN BY LIVING ON IN 'ANOTHER FORM'?
EGOS YOU KEEP CALLING MY NAME BUT SOMEONE ELSE TELLS ME TO RUN AWAY IS THAT YOU TOO? OR
COULD IT BE
NO THAT'S IMPOS-SIBLE!
EGOS DEVELOPMENT RECORD FILE 1
BEEP
EIKO...
RECEIVE MODE

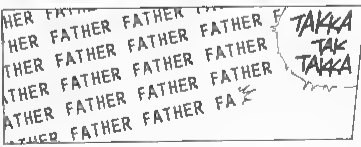

TAK
TAKKA
COMMAND:
SENSORS ON
N
W
E
BE
EP
BE
EP
RED
SPLASH

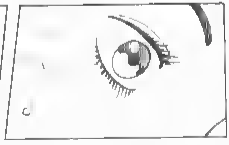
SKSSHHH
EGOS !!
IT'S HEADING FOR THE REEF...

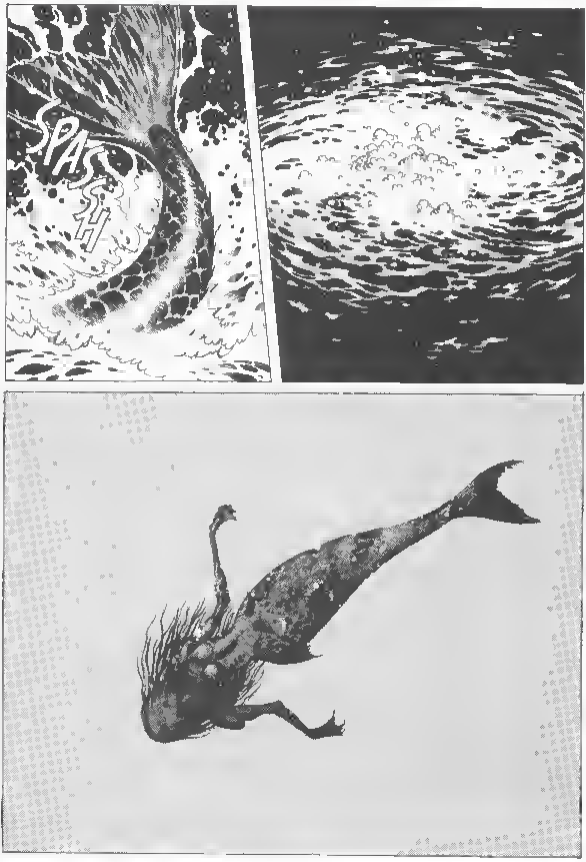
TAK TAK TAKKA
FATHER FATHER
FATHER FATH

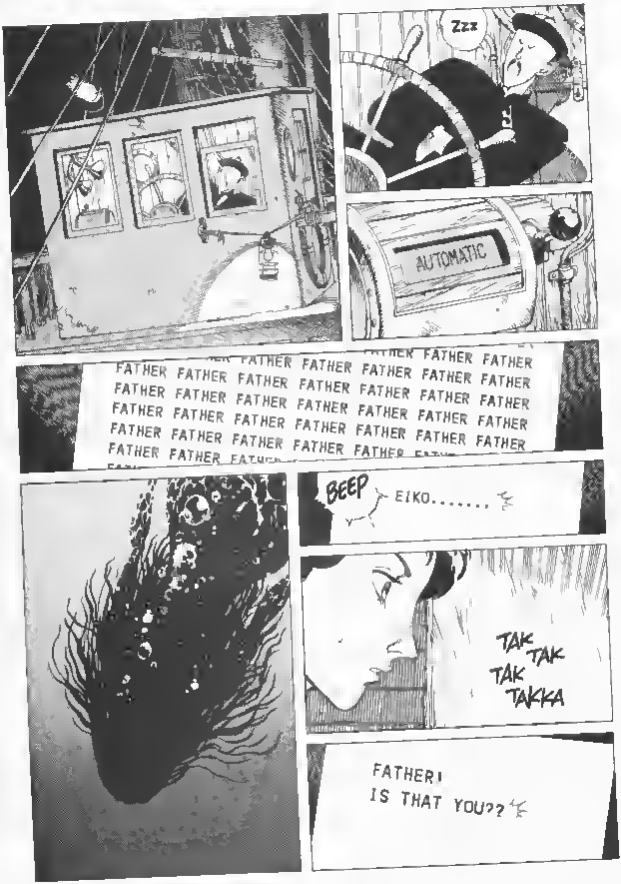




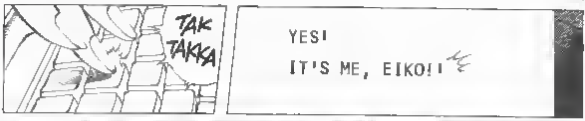

HER FATHER FATHER
THER FATHER FATHER FATHER
THER FATHER FATHER FATHER
ATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER
ATHER FATHER FATHER FA
TAKKA
TAK
TAKKA




SPASH

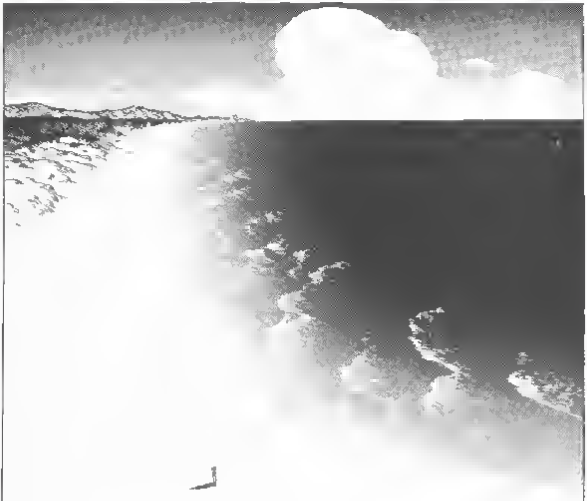

Zzz
AUTOMATIC
FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER
FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER
FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER
FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER
FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER
BEEP
EIKO.....
TAK TAK
TAK TAKKA
FATHER!
IS THAT YOU??

AAAHHH... I... I FEEL AS IF I'M IN A WAKING DREAM...
I, I AM HIGURE... YES, TSUKIMITSU HIGURE.
SOMEONE IS CALLING ME.. EIKO... ARE YOU EIKO...?



YOUR WORDS... REACH ME... MINGLED WITH THE SOUND
OF THE WAVES, THE ROAR OF THE WIND...
I... I AM A SINGLE GRAIN OF SAND ON THE BEACH.
THE WAVES ROLL IN, STIRRING UP THE SAND...
THE WIND BLOWS, THE SAND DANCES...
ALL THE BEACH TREMBLES...

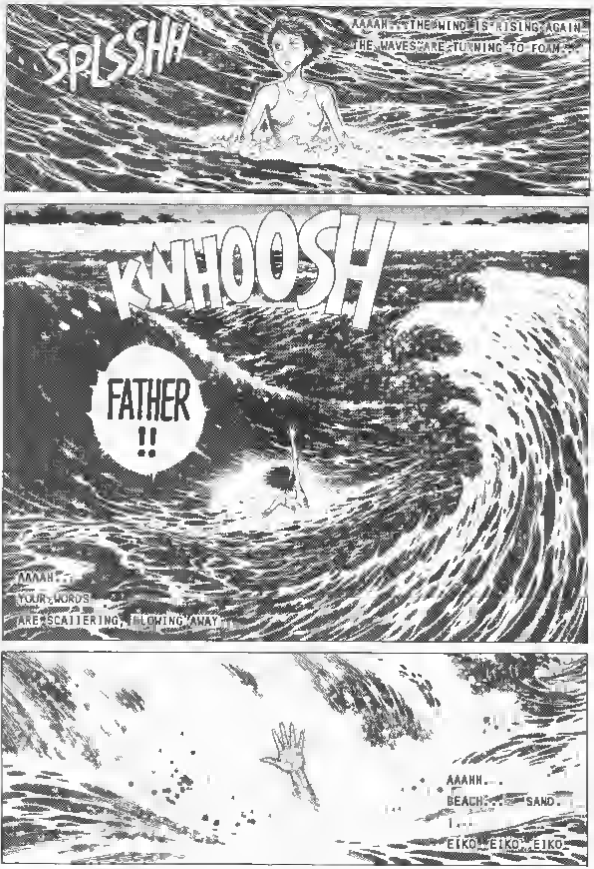
"ONCE IN A GREAT WHILE HERE ON THIS BEACH A FAINT RECOLLECTION ARISES THAT I AM TSUKIMITSU HIGURE—
"THAT IS ALL THAT EXISTS OF ME NOW—"

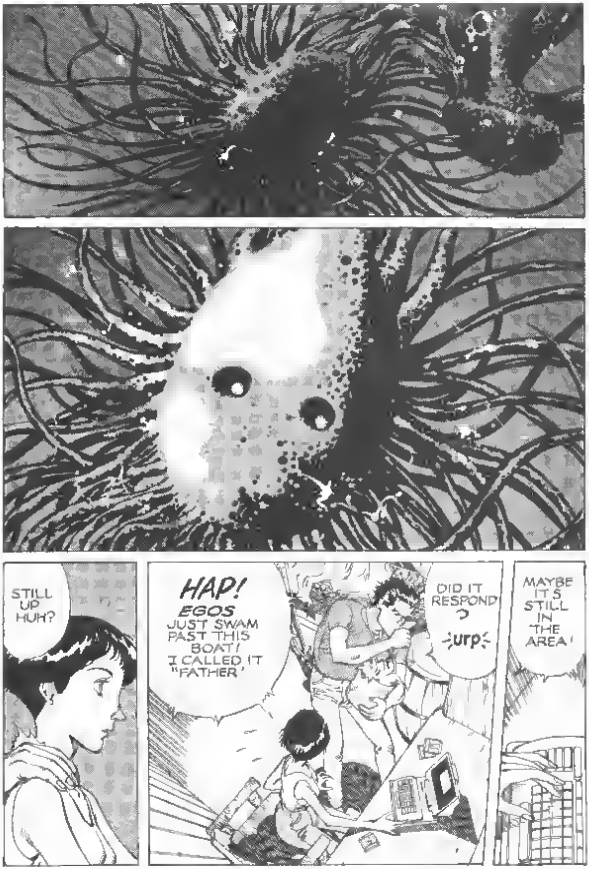


EGOS IS A WIDE, SANDY BEACH.
WAVES BREAK ONE AFTER ANOTHER
THE WIND BLOWS CEASELESSLY
MORE AND MORE SAND COLLECTS ON THE BEACH

EIKO...
WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE, I OFTEN BROUGHT YOU TO THE SEA

THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS THAT WASH UP ON THE SHORE...


SPLSSHH
AAAAH... THE WIND IS RISING AGAIN
THE WAVES ARE TURNING TO FOAM...
KWHOOSH
FATHER
!!
AAAAH...
YOUR WORDS
ARE SCATTERING, FLOWING AWAY...
AAAHH...
BEACH... SAND...
I...
EIKO... EIKO... EIKO...

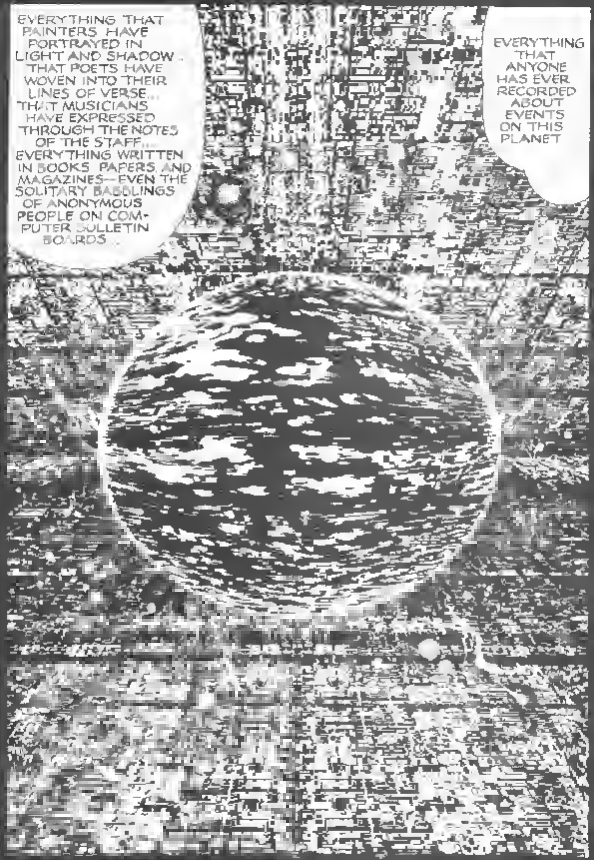

STILL UP HUH?
HAP! EGOS JUST SWAM PAST THIS BOAT! I CALLED IT "FATHER"
DID IT RESPOND ?
:urp:
MAYBE IT'S STILL IN THE AREA!

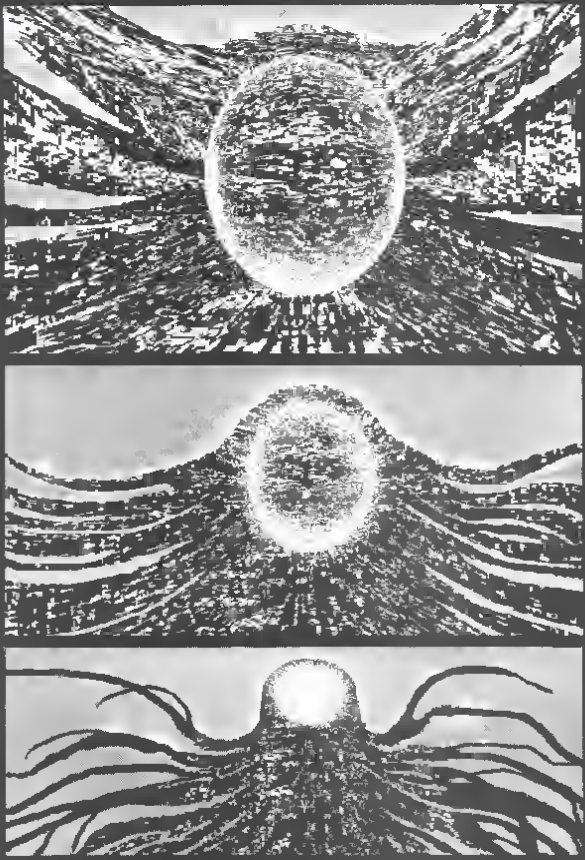
BEEP
N
-890
OUT
IT'S MOVING OUT OF RANGE
NOW JUST HOLD ON A SECOND. HERE YOU'RE SAYING THAT EGOS IS DR HIGURE?!
YES AND NO--MY FATHER LIVES ON INSIDE EGOS!
SAY WHA-?!
HAW HAW HAW HAW...!
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING
IT CONTAINS MY FATHER'S THOUGHTS AND MEMORIES--HIS MIND!
THE MIND OF DR. HIGURE IN EGOS EH?
HAR HAR HAW HAR... YEE HEE HEE!
STOP LAUGHING LIKE AN IDIOT!!
MY FATHER MUST HAVE REALIZED HE DIDN'T HAVE LONG TO LIVE

SO WHILE HE WAS KEEPING HIS RECORD OF EGOS' DEVELOPMENT, HE STARTED STORING HIS THOUGHTS ON THIS DISKETTE
MY FATHER KNEW EGOS WOULD EVENTUALLY ACCESS THE DISK AND LOAD HIS THOUGHTS INTO ITS MEMORY
HIS THOUGHTS LIKE A DIARY?
MORE THAN THAT--HE ENTERED WHATEVER CAME INTO HIS MIND, POURING HIS WHOLE PERSONALITY INTO THE COMPUTER

KNOWING THAT EGOS GOBBLES UP EVERY BIT OF KNOWLEDGE IT CAN GET HUH...
-hlrgg
-urp.
B-BUT -koff- D'YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN INPUT SOMETHING LIKE A PERSON'S MIND LIKE THAT THROUGH A KEYBOARD?
YOU REALLY THINK YOUR DAD'S PERSONALITY IS RESPONDING TO YOU FROM INSIDE EGOS AS IF THE GOOD DOCTOR HIMSELF WERE LIVING IN THERE?
I THINK THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT'S HAPPENING! BECAUSE EGO'S PHYSICAL SELF IS FORMED DIRECTLY FROM THE KNOWLEDGE IT CONSUMES
JUST AS IF HIS SOUL WAS LIVING INSIDE EGO'S BODY- EH?
HACK
TRGGT
BAUT
YES, EXACTLY!
oOOo
T-THEN MAYBE WE OUGHTA CALL IT "DR EGOS"

NO, MY FATHER'S ONLY A SMALL PART OF EGOS
EGOS IS LIKE A VAST SANDY BEACH, A VAST MEMORY BANK
-hor-gg-
IT HAS STORED EVERY CONCEIVABLE KIND OF INFORMATION-- HISTORY, SCIENCE, RELIGION, ART--FROM THE PAST DOWN TO THE PRESENT, AND THAT KNOWLEDGE CONTAINS BLOOD, SWEAT, TEARS... CRIES AND WHISPERS... JOY, SADNESS AND ANGER


EVERYTHING THAT PAINTERS HAVE PORTRAYED IN LIGHT AND SHADOW... THAT POETS HAVE WOVEN INTO THEIR LINES OF VERSE... THAT MUSICIANS HAVE EXPRESSED THROUGH THE NOTES OF THE STAFF... EVERYTHING WRITTEN IN BOOKS, PAPERS AND MAGAZINES—EVEN THE SOLITARY BABBLINGS OF ANONYMOUS PEOPLE ON COMPUTER BULLETIN BOARDS...
EVERYTHING THAT ANYONE HAS EVER RECORDED ABOUT EVENTS ON THIS PLANET



OR TO PUT IT ANOTHER WAY--
--THE THOUGHTS AND SOULS OF PRACTICALLY EVERY HUMAN EVER BORN HAVE COME BACK TO LIFE INSIDE EGOS!
THOSE IN THE DATA BANKS ANY-WAY!
THIS IS MAKIN' ME DIZZY. I'M GOING OUT ON DECK FOR SOME FRESH AIR
STILL I DON'T GET IT! OUT OF THAT HUGE MEMORY BANK HOW DID YOU GET A REPLY FROM DR. HIGURE WHEN YOU INPUT "FATHER"?
THERE MUST BE A ZILLION FATHERS IN THERE
THINK OF ALL THE FATHERS IN ALL THE NOVELS AND MOVIES EGOS HAS MEMORIZED WHY DIDN'T ONE OF THEM RESPOND INSTEAD?
I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT
BUT I DO KNOW IT'S MY FATHER I THINK THIS IS WHAT HE MEANT BY LIVING ON IN ANOTHER FORM

HMMM THIS IS GETTIN' COMPLI-CATED...
LESSEE NOW - EGOS CONTAINS THE SUM TOTAL OF HUMANITY AS WELL AS DR HIGURE'S MIND PERSONALITY WHAT EVER
EGOS
HUMANITY
DR HIGURE
WHICH MEANS HMM
LOOK--WE CAN ASSUME IT WAS YOUR DAD WHO ASKED YOU TO MEET HIM AND WHO TOLD YOU TO LEAVE LAKE TORRENS RIGHT?
RIGHT!
MEANING THAT MAYBE EGOS IS IN SOME WAY DANGEROUS IN FACT IT COULD BE ON ITS WAY TO BECOMING THE GREATEST ENEMY TO HUMANITY THAT'S EVER EXISTED EH?
I'M GOING TO TRY ACCESSING MY FATHER INSIDE EGOS AGAIN!
MAYBE I CAN FIND OUT WHAT WAS WRITTEN IN THE PART OF FILE "A" THAT EGOS ERASED!
MAYBE IT WAS SOMETHING EGOS DIDN'T WANT HUMAN BEINGS TO SEE--

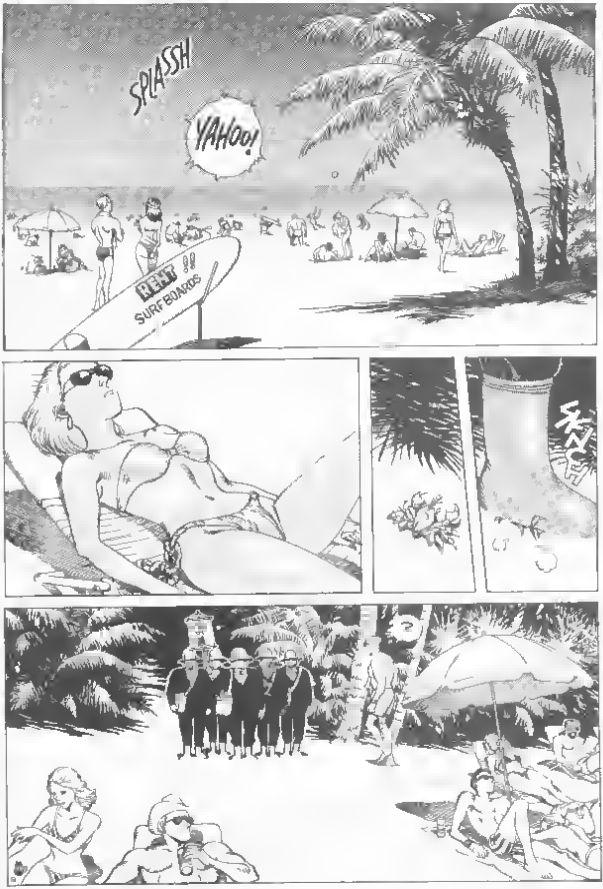
To be continued

VERSION 1.7

DARK HORSE COMICS

$2.50 US
$3.15 CAN

by Hisashi Sakaguchi


SPLASH!
YAHOO!
RENT !!
SURF BOARDS
SNIFF

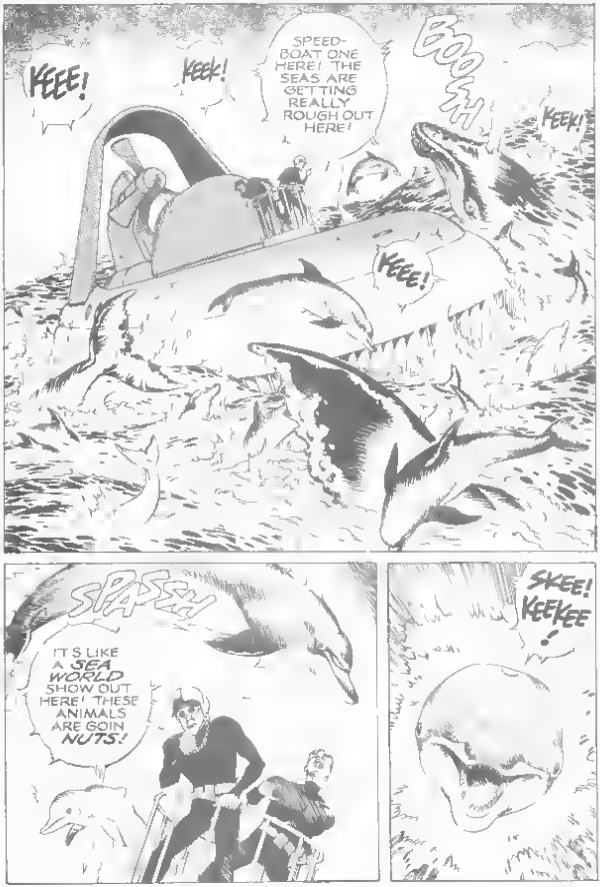
THIS IS UNCLE BEN WE'VE ARRIVED AT GREEN ISLAND FORTY MINUTES FROM CAIRNS--OVER
THERE'S A RUMOR HERE THAT A MERMAID WAS SEEN SUNNING HERSELF ON THIS BEACH
T-- MEANT WE NOW HAVE SEVERAL REPORTED MERMAID SIGHTINGS IN THE BARRIER REEF AREA
YOU THINK THE BIOCHIP'S SWIMMING OUT THERE SOME WHERE ?
-SPLSSH
HEH HEH HEH
ACCORDING TO HEADQUARTERS
A MEMO HAS BEEN FOUND IN THE APARTMENT OF SHIRO OSAWAGI A FORMER MEMBER OF THE BIOCHIP DEVELOPMENT PROJECT THAT SAYS -
THE BIOCHIP HAS BECOME A MERMAID"
I DON'T KNOW THE PART C LOARS BUT WE'RE UNDER ORDERS TO FOLLOW UP ON ANY INFORMATION WE HEAR ABOUT MERMAIDS

WHERE DO YOU THINK HIGURE'S DAUGHTER AND THE DETECTIVE WENT AFTER THEY ABANDONED THEIR TRUCK AT LAKE TORRENS BOSS?
HEY BOSS! HEY!!
HUH? OH YES IT SEEMS WE ARRIVED A BIT TOO LATE
BUT THE LONG GRAIN TEAM IS TRACKING OSAWAGI I'M SURE HE'LL LEAD US TO THEM EVENTUALLY
YOW! THIS WATER'S FREEZING!
VV
WAAAH! MOMMM!!

BRRR! THAT'S SOME COLD WIND!
SCUFF
HEY!
WHAT IN TH-?
EEK!
OORK
ORK
ORNK
IT'S A WHOLE HERD OF WALRUS!
SEALS TOO!
ARK ARK
ORK OORK
OORNK

SPLISH
?
LET'S TAKE A LOOK AROUND THE REEF
P-
PENGUINS ?!
SKREE!
KREE!
KREE!
KREE!

SPEEDBOAT TWO HERE A COLDWATER CURRENT APPEARS TO BE FLOWING IN TO THE GREAT BARRIER REEF
THIS IS CAUSING THE AIR TO COOL AND FORM THUNDER-CLOUDS!
SPEEDBOAT FIVE REPORTING THERE'S ANOTHER COLD CURRENT FLOWING IN FROM THE NORTH!
BEEP
THIS IS HELO THREE THE WARM AND COLD CURRENTS ARE COLLIDING AND FORMING WHIRL-POOLS!
SO THOSE MARINE ANIMALS ARE RIDING IN ON CURRENTS FROM ALL OVER THE PLACE EH ?
BEEP KLIK TAK
TAKA TAK
WHAT COULD BE CAUSING THESE CHANGES IN THE CURRENTS?!
NOW ANALYZING CAUSE OF CHANGES IN 3 CURRENTS. PLEASE WAIT- - - -
<CHECKED>
- TRADE WINDS MONTHLY MEANS
- AIR TEMPERATURE
- ROTATION OF EARTH
- SALT CONTENT OF SEAWATER
OTHER
BEEP -KLIK-
Swain Reefs
1
N
SPEEDBOAT ONE'S AT THE EASTERN EDGE OF THE SWAIN REEFS THE EDDIES ARE GROWING BIGGER IN THAT DIRECTION

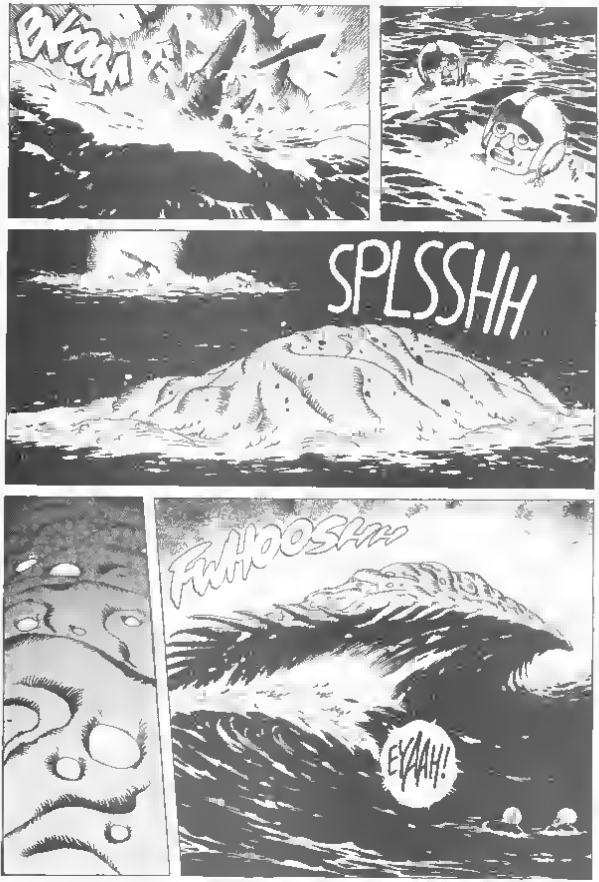

KEEE!
KEEK!
SPEED-BOAT ONE HERE! THE SEAS ARE GETTING REALLY ROUGH OUT HERE!
BOOM
KEEK!
KEEE!
SPLASH
IT'S LIKE A SEA WORLD SHOW OUT HERE! THESE ANIMALS ARE GOIN NUTS!
SKEE! KEEKEE!

YAARGHH!
WHBLOOI!
KEE!
KREE! SKEEK!
SPLSSS
KEEK!
BLACK ECHO SIR! THE SEA STATE IS REACHING DANGEROUS LEVELS! WE'D BETTER MOVE OUT!
BESIDES IN THESE CONDITIONS WE CAN'T EVEN USE THE SONAR TO LOOK FOR EGOS!

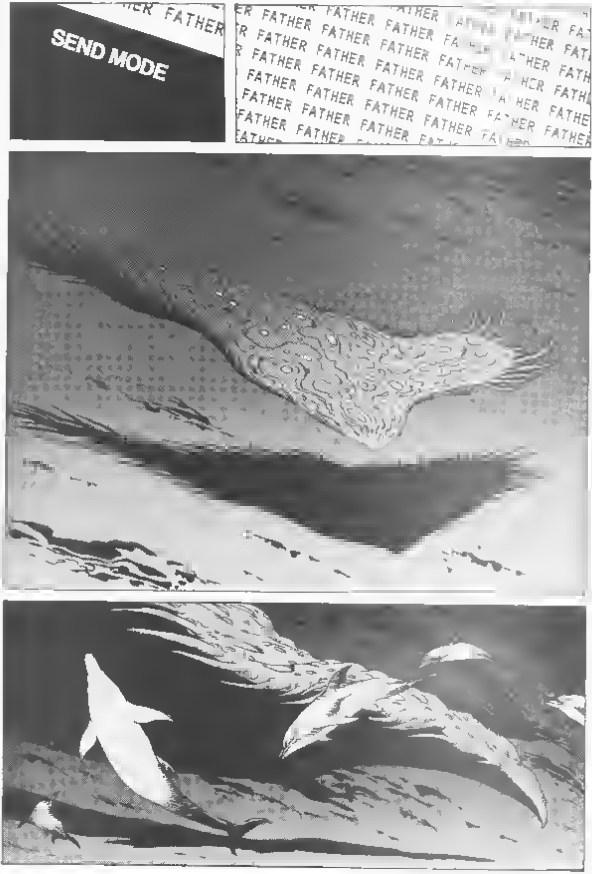
BEEP
ANALYSIS COMPLETE. CAUSE OF OCEAN CURRENT SHIFTS IS SOUND WAVES.
SOUND WAVES ?! WHAT THE HELL ?!
WHAT'S GENERATING THEM?!
BLACK ECHO SIR! WE CAN'T EVEN SEE THE OCEAN NOW. THERE'S SO MUCH FOAM!
TAK TAKKA TAK
PLEASE WAIT.....
THIS IS HELO ONE WE'VE FOUND SOME KIND OF CREATURE
!!
IT'S TRAVELING AT UNBELIEVABLE SPEED - 300kph THAT'S OVER 180mph!
RIGHT NOW IT'S 60 MILES SOUTH OF THE SWAIN REEF
IT APPEARED VERY SUDDENLY AND IS HEADING NORTH!
WHSSHH

180mph! THAT'S GOT TO BE EGOS!!
HAVE BEEN OUTSIDE SONAR RANGE!! DON'T LOSE IT NOW!
VE CAPTURED A CLEAR IMAGE OF IT ON THE HELO'S MAGNETIC ANOMALY DETEC TOR -
-IT MUST BE PRODUCING A POWERFU MAGNETIC FIELD! IT'S MOVING OUT NOW, ALONG THE REEF'S EDGE!
ALL HELOS AND BOATS PROCEED TOWARD SWAIN REEFS! SHIFT TO IRON RING FORMA-TION!!
THIS TIME WE'LL CATCH IT I SWEAR
BRM.M
VWHOOOSH!!
00:01:51
325km h
THE COMPUTER ENHANCEMENT SHOWS IT HAS - SOMETHING LIKE A PROPELLOR AT THE BACK!

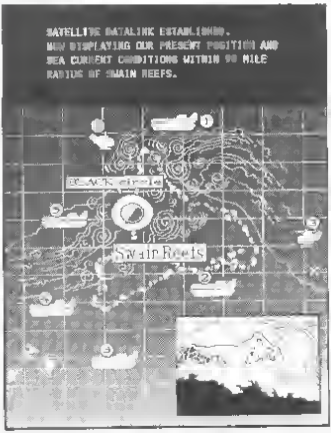
IT'S DIVING!
IT'S LEAVING SONAR RANGE TOO!
SHIT! LOOKS LIKE WE LOST IT...
WH--?!
EYAA-AAAA!
WHUP WHUP WHUP.
"WHUP WHUP "WHUP"

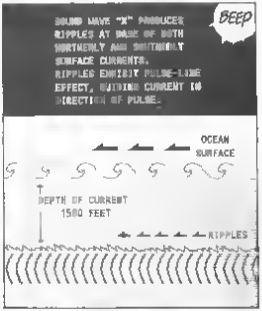

BKOOM
SPLSSHH
FWOOSH
EYAAH!

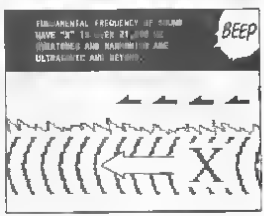
FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER
NO REPLY
THE CLOSER WE GET TO THE BARRIER REEF THE ROUGHER IT GETS
urp
ooog
YAR HAR HAR HAR...
EVEN THE WAVES ARE RISING UP IN CELEBRATION!
FWAP
FWAP
WHOA!
COME ON BACK ERE!

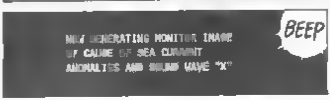

SEND MODE
FATHER

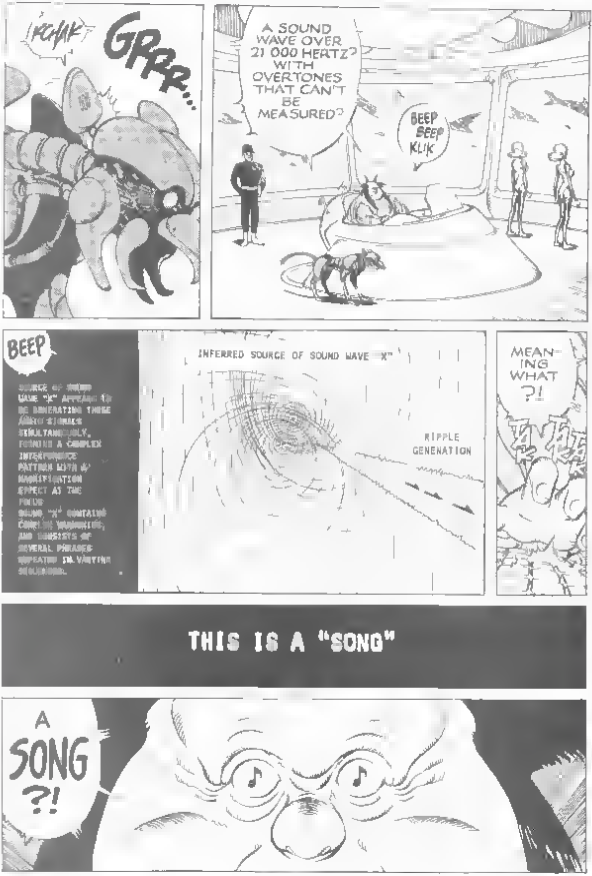
T S
DAWN


SATELLITE DATALINK ESTABLISHED.
NAV DISPLAYING OUR PRESENT POSITION AND SEA CURRENT CONDITIONS WITHIN 90 MILE RADIUS OF SWAIN REEFS.
Swain Reefs

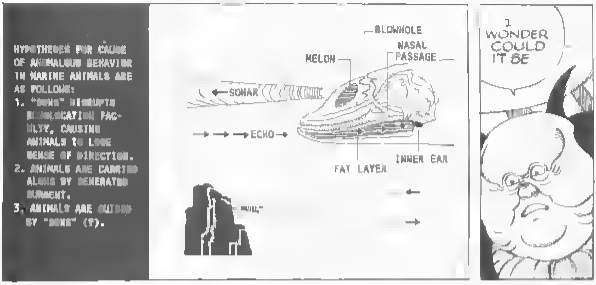

SOUND WAVE "X" PRODUCES RIPPLES AT BASE OF BOTH NORTHERLY AND SOUTHERLY SURFACE CURRENTS. RIPPLES EXHIBIT PULSE-LIKE EFFECT, MAKING CURRENT IN DIRECTION OF PULSE.
BEEP
OCEAN SURFACE
DEPTH OF CURRENT 1500 FEET
RIPPLES

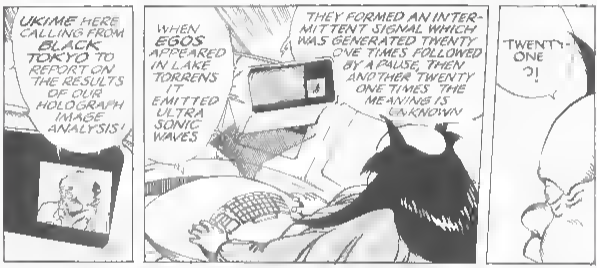

FUNDAMENTAL FREQUENCY OF SOUND WAVE "X" IS OVER 21,000 HZ (ULTRASONIC AND BEYOND).
BEEP
X

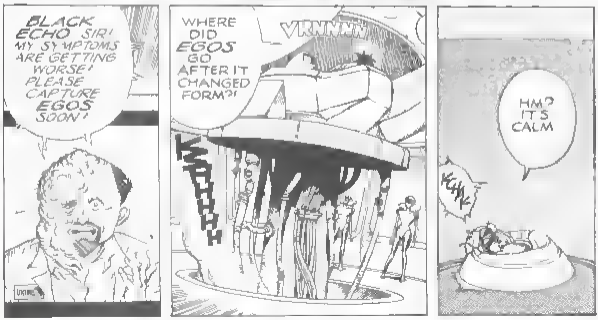

NAV GENERATING MONITOR IMAGE OF CAUSE OF SEA CURRENT ANOMALIES AND SOUND WAVE "X"
BEEP


PCHAK
GRRR...
A SOUND WAVE OVER 21 000 HERTZ? WITH OVERTONES THAT CAN'T BE MEASURED?
BEEP BEEP KLIK
BEEP
INFERRED SOURCE OF SOUND WAVE "X"
RIPPLE GENERATION
MEAN-ING WHAT ?!
THIS IS A "SONG"
A SONG ?!

RANGE OF HUMAN HEARING IS 16 TO 20,000 HERTZ. SOUND "X" IS ULTRA-SONIC AND THEREFORE INAUDIBLE TO HUMANS. AS SOUND "X" IS CURRENTLY NOT BEING GENERATED, SOURCE CANNOT BE TRACED.


HYPOTHESES FOR CAUSE OF ANOMALOUS BEHAVIOR IN MARINE ANIMALS ARE AS FOLLOWS:
1. "SONAR" DISRUPTS ECHOLOCATION FACULTY, CAUSING ANIMALS TO LOSE SENSE OF DIRECTION.
2. ANIMALS ARE CARRIED ALONG BY GENERATED CURRENT.
3. ANOMALY ARE CAUSED BY "SONAR" (?).
BLOWHOLE
NASAL PASSAGE
MELON
SONAR
ECHO
FAT LAYER
INNER EAR
WHALE
I WONDER COULD IT BE

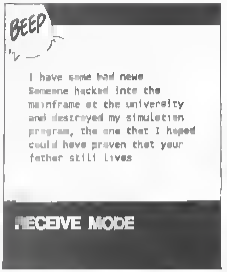

UKIME HERE CALLING FROM BLACK TOKYO TO REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF OUR HOLOGRAPH IMAGE ANALYSIS!
WHEN EGOS APPEARED IN LAKE TORRENS IT EMITTED ULTRA SONIC WAVES
THEY FORMED AN INTERMITTENT SIGNAL WHICH WAS GENERATED TWENTY ONE TIMES FOLLOWED BY A PAUSE, THEN ANOTHER TWENTY ONE TIMES. THE MEANING IS UNKNOWN
TWENTY ONE ?!


BLACK ECHO SIR! MY SYMPTOMS ARE GETTING WORSE! PLEASE CAPTURE EGOS SOON!
WHERE DID EGOS GO AFTER IT CHANGED FORM?!
VRRRRR
WAWWWH
HMM? IT'S CALM
KUHK

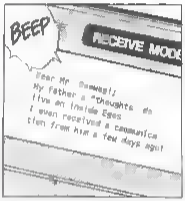
LOOK! THE REEF!!

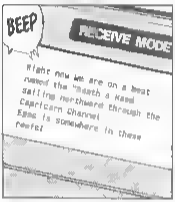
THIS REALLY IS A 'GREAT' BARRIER REEF EH?
THIS IS JUST THE SOUTHERN EDGE - YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHIN' YET!
NO SIGN O' THEM WHALES AND DOLPHINS MAYBE THEY BE SWIMMIN WAY DOWN IN THE DEEPS
SAY CAP'N HOW DO YOU PLAN TO FIND THE MERMAID, ANYWAY?
AHRR, DON'T THEY TEACH YOU ANYTHIN' IN SCHOOL MATEY?
OOH LOOK AT THAT!

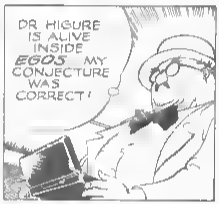
IT BE WELL KNOWN THAT MERMAIDS LOVE EEL-GRASS!
OH YEAH? SO YOU FIGURE SHE'LL SMELL THAT AND COME RUNNING?
YAHOO!
SPASSH
THE WATER'S WARMING UP AGAIN! I'LL GO CATCH US SOME LUNCH!
BEEP
YOUR DAD?
NO IT'S MR OSAWAGI
BEEP
Dear K
We found [illegible] the truck [illegible] at [illegible] he came a[illegible] with [illegible] as [illegible] ng he saw your family. Anyway he and I have just [illegible] ved at Ca[illegible] rns airport
RECEIVE MODE
OH GOOD PUNKY'S SAFE!


BEEP
I have some bad news
Someone hacked into the mainframe at the university and destroyed my simulation program, the one that I hoped could have proven that your father still lives
RECEIVE MODE

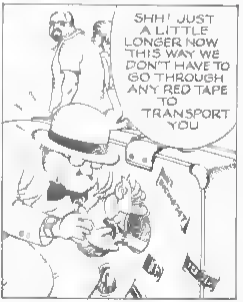
I THINK EGOS DID IT ?!
IT MUST HAVE READ THE MESSAGES BETWEEN ME AND MR OSAWA!! AND LOGGED INTO THE UNIVERSITY COMPUTER


BEEP
RECEIVE MODE
Dear Mr. Osawa!!
My father's "thoughts" on
I've an Inside Egos
I even received a communica
tion from him a few days ago!


BEEP
RECEIVE MODE
Right now we are on a boat
cruising the South & West
sailing northward through the
Capricorn Channel
Egos is somewhere in these
parts!


DR. HIGURE IS ALIVE INSIDE EGOS! MY CONJECTURE WAS CORRECT!

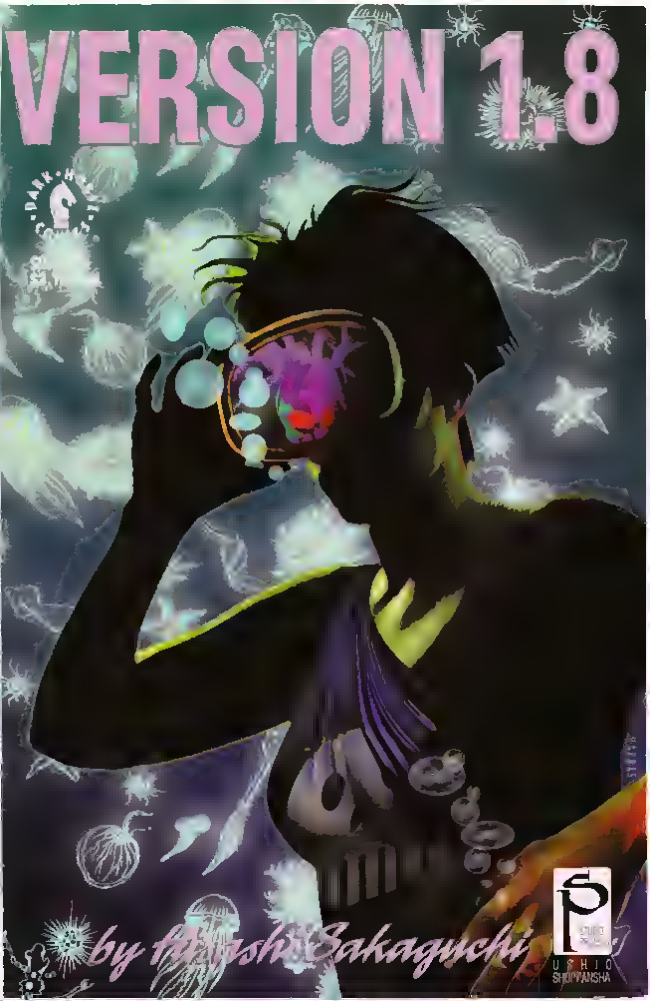
THE CAPRICORN CHANNEL EH... NEAR THE SWAIN REEFS
OOK! KREE!
TRIDO WHMP


SHH! JUST A LITTLE LONGER NOW THIS WAY WE DON'T HAVE TO GO THROUGH ANY RED TAPE TO TRANSPORT YOU

SHK

FLIGHT 005 NOW BOARDING
GUESS I'D BETTER CHARTER A LIGHT PLANE
SO THEY'RE SAILING NORTH THROUGH THE CAPRICORN CHANNEL
LONG GRAIN TO UNCLE BEN
VRRMMM
EEEK!
LONG GRAIN HAS TRACKED DOWN EIKO HIGURE AND THE DETECTIVE!
HEAD SOUTH TOWARDS THE CAPRICORN CHANNEL!
VRRMMM

TO BE CONTINUED


VERSION 1.8
by Hiroshi Sakaguchi
USHIO SHUPPANSHA

♫ FIFTEEN MEN ON A DEAD MAN'S CHEST ♫
YO-HO-HO AND A BOTTLE O RUM ♫
CAPTAIN! TELL US MORE ABOUT THE GOLDEN CONCH. DIDN'T THE MERMAID TELL YOU ANYTHING ELSE?
YEAH WISH THE MERMAID I MET WAS BEAUTIFUL, WITH SKIN "WHITE AS MARBLE" LIKE YOURS WAS!
WHAT? D'YE MEAN TO SAY YE'VE SEEN A MERMAID YOURSELVES?
WHAT WAS THE MERMAID'S VOICE LIKE?
VOICE? HER VOICE, EH HMM... BY DAMN I'D SWEAR BY GOD'S BLOOD I HEARD HER VOICE THAT DAY. BUT SHE DIDN'T MOVE HER MOUTH AT ALL. GOR HAPS I REMEMBER BUBBLES A RISING FROM 'TWEEN HER SCALES, TOO—
AN' IT SEEMED AS IF SHE WERE SINGIN' A SONG BELIKE
A SONG?
MEBBE THE TITLE WAS "THE GOLDEN CONCH" HEH HEH

Y KNOW "GOLDEN CONCH" HAS A NICE RING TO IT. LIKE IT MIGHT POINT THE WAY TO A SUNKEN TREASURE CHEST STUFFED FULL OF GOLD AND SILVER, OR SOMETHIN'...
WHSSH
IT'S QUITE THE IMAGI-NATION YE'VE GOT MATEY!
C'MON. YOU WERE THINKING THE SAME THING RIGHT? RELAX. HOW'S 30 PERCENT FOR ME AND 70 PERCENT FOR YOU SOUND?
HOW'S ABOUT 100 PERCENT FOR ME AND NOTHIN' FOR YOU?
EEP. OKAY YOU'RE THE CAP-TAIN.
HEYYY!
COME LOOK! THE CORALS BEAUTIFUL HERE!
I'M STILL FEELIN' A BIT SEA-SICK
THIS'LL DO FOR A SWIMSUIT! YOU DON'T MIND DO YOU?
OI! THAT BE OUR SPARE FLAG!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT MISTER EMPEROR OF THE SEA
VA-VA-VOOM!!
BOOM
OOOH! IT'S SO BEAU-TIFUL!

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THIS IS THE WORK OF A BUNCH OF TINY POLYPS
THE COLOR CHANGES WITH THE LIGHT
SO MANY COLORS SHAPES AND FORMS IT'S LIKE LOOKING THROUGH A KALEIDO SCOPE OF LIFE

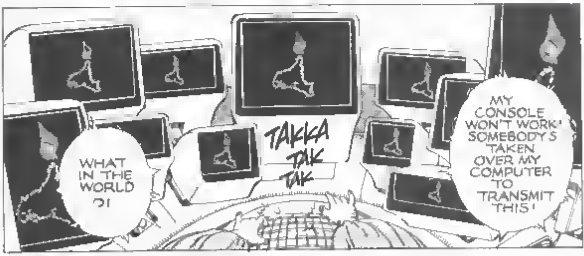
< SO, CAP-- SEEMS LIKE THE MERMAID SINGLED YOU OUT FOR SOME REASON, EH >
< MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE A FISHER-MAN >
?
< IN OTHER WORDS A THIEF OF THE SEA, HEH HEH THOUGH I GOTTA ADMIT I ENJOY EATING THE LOOT YOU CATCH MYSELF >
< AH WHATEVER AT ANY RATE PEOPLE ARE NEWCOMERS TO THIS PLANET THERE'S FISH AND ANIMALS AND PLANTS THAT HAVE BEEN HERE SINCE WAY BEFORE HUMANS APPEARED>
TAK
TAK TAK
< AND FOR ALL THOSE CLAIMS ABOUT WHO "DISCOVERED" AMERICA OR AUSTRALIA, THEY ALREADY HAD INDIANS AND ABORIGINES LIVING THERE— LIKE EIKO KEEPS REMINDING ME >
< CAUSE WE'RE SO SMART AND POWERFUL, WE LORD IT OVER ALL OTHER LIVING CREA-TURES >
< CRACKS ARE APPEARING IN THE FABRIC OF THINGS-- IN THE SKIES MOUNTAINS, AND OCEANS OF GAIA--ALL BECAUSE OF HUMANS, IT SEEMS >
< BUT NOW WE'VE GROWN TOO SMART FOR OUR OWN GOOD SHE SAYS GAIA THE EARTH GODDESS HAS FALLEN SICK AND MIGHT EVEN DIE >

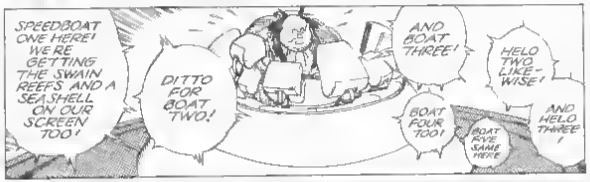
WHY AIN'T YSPEAKIN ENGLISH THOU BABBLIN DOG?
<EH? WHAZZAT? YA WANNA TALK TO ME SPEAK JAPANESE!>
<YOU BIG FAT GREEDY NUT CASE!>
NYAHAHA!
HAHAHA
SINCE LIFE FIRST APPEARED ON THIS PLANET HOW MANY DIFFERENT VARIETIES HAVE BEEN DESIGNED DO YOU SUPPOSE?
KREEAA
SKRREEE
DESIGNED
EVERY FORM THAT LIFE TAKES IS DETERMINED BY GENES, YOU KNOW
SKRREEE
PEOPLE TOO?
YOU BET
OUR GENETIC PROGRAM HAS TAKEN A LONG LONG TIME TO DESIGN THE HUMAN RACE
BEEP BEEP BEEP

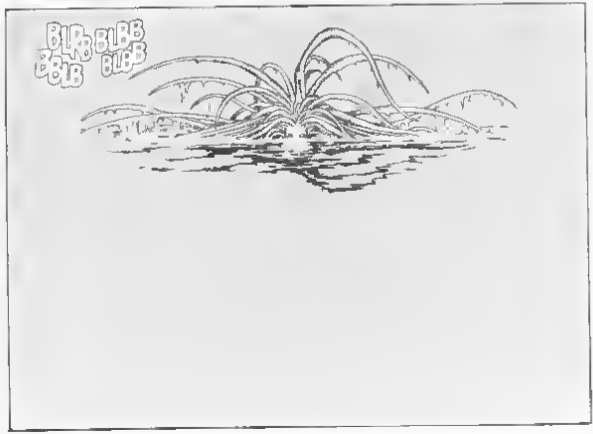
I-IT'S HERE!
EGOS IS HERE-- RIGHT UNDER THE BOAT! GET ON BOARD QUICK!
"EGOS"?
THE MER-MAID!
EIKO! COME BACK!!
SPLSSH
!

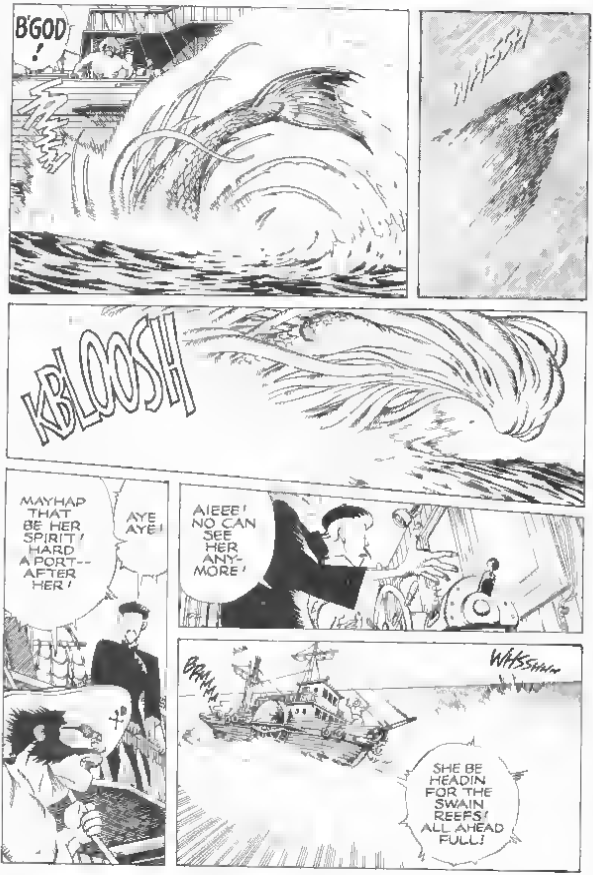
-DAMME IT BE HER AT LONG LAST! HERE HAVE SOME EEL-GRASS!
SPLSSH
hhhh ahhh

BLBB
BRBLB
BLBB
BLBB
B-BY THE POWERS! YON BEAST LOOK NOT AT ALL LIKE MY MERMAID FAIR! AND IT BE A LOT BIGGER!
HELL WHO KNOWS WHAT IT REALLY LOOKS LIKE!
IT'S EYES ARE GLOWING!
BEEP
LOOK!
RECEIVE MODE
THAT'S A MAP OF THE SWAIN REEFS!
AND A SEASHELL! IS THAT THE 'GOLDEN CONCH'?!
THE KEY-BOARD'S LOCKED UP!
THE TALE OF TALE
那是什么?!
WHAT THAT?!


WHAT IN THE WORLD ?!
TAKKA TAK TAK
MY CONSOLE WON'T WORK! SOMEBODY'S TAKEN OVER MY COMPUTER TO TRANSMIT THIS!


SPEEDBOAT ONE HERE! WE'RE GETTING THE SWAIN REEFS AND A SEASHELL ON OUR SCREEN TOO!
DITTO FOR BOAT TWO!
AND BOAT THREE!
HELO TWO LACE-WISE!
BOAT FOUR TOO!
BOAT FIVE SAME PIPPIE
AND HELO THREE!

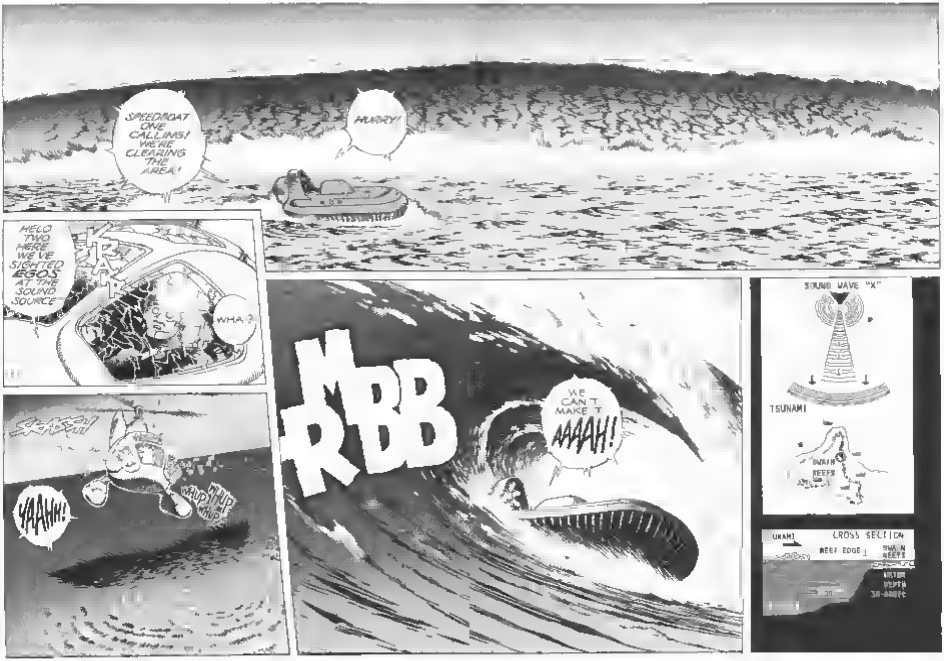

BLBBLBB BBLB BLBB


B'GOD!
WHEESH
KBLOOSH
MAYHAP THAT BE HER SPIRIT! HARD A PORT--AFTER HER!
AYE AYE!
AIEEE! NO CAN SEE HER ANY-MORE!
BRRMM
WHSSHHH
SHE BE HEADIN FOR THE SWAIN REEFS! ALL AHEAD FULL!

BEEP
RECEIVE MODE
NOW IT'S DISPLAYING THE SYMBOLS FOR MAN AND WOMAN
AND AN APPLE WHAT COULD THAT MEAN ?
NOW WHAT ?!
BEEP
[DELETE]
DELETE!

WE SAIL ONE HOUR ALREADY CAP'N
BRRM MMM
SWAIN REEFS COME UP SOON
YAHOOO! FAIR DINKUM!
SINK ME!
MAYBE THEY'RE HAVING A BIG DANCE PARTY TO CELEBRATE THE ARRIVAL OF THE EMPEROR OF THE SEA— HEH HEH HEH
KEE
KEEK
KEEK
KEEK
KEE
YAR HAR HAR...
WE'LL SOON BE SEEIN' TH' GOLDEN CONCH BY HELL'S BELLS! GET THE CRANE AND MY DIVING SUIT READY CURSE YE!

HAP! THIS IS ADAM AND EVE! THE APPLE IS THE FRUIT OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE! SO THIS MUST MEAN "HUMANITY" DON'T YOU THINK?!
HUMAN-ITY" YEAH!
'HUMANITY AND "DELETE WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!
IS THAT A MESSAGE FROM EGOS ?!
THIS IS HELO TWO! TSUNAMI SIGHTED!
THE SCREEN S BACK TO NORMAL!
A HUGE SWELL HAS FORMED IN THE OCEAN ABOUT TEN KILOMETERS EAST OF THE SWAIN REEFS IT S GETTING BIGGER AND BIGGER AND IT'S HEADING TOWARD THE REEF!
WHUP
WHUPWHUP
RVBB
SOUND WAVE "X" DETECTED. TSUNAMI IS PRODUCED BY "X".
THE "SONG HAS STARTED AGAIN!


SPEEDBOAT ONE CALLING! WE'RE CLEARING THE AREA!
HURRY!
HELO TWO HERE! WE'VE SIGHTED ORCAS AT THE SOUND SOURCE
WHA?
SPLASH!
YAAHH!
HANG ON TIGHT HONEY!
RRBB
WE CAN'T MAKE IT
AAAAH!
SOUND WAVE "X"
TSUNAMI
DANGER REEFS
UNAM
CROSS SECTION
REEF EDGE
DANGER REEFS
WATER DEPTH
SUB-MARINE

HMM. THE REEF EDGE DROPS OFF SUDDENLY TO A DEPTH OF ABOUT 3000 FEET.
WHAT'S EGOS UP TO.. ?!
POWER
BLACK ECHO, SIR! IF WE DON'T MOVE BLACK CIRCLE WE'LL BE SWALLOWED BY THE TSUNAMI TOO!
BEEP BEEP
THE MARINE ANIMALS HAVE ALSO BEGUN EMITTING ULTRASONIC WAVES..
BLOOM
KOOO KOO
?

CAP'N! SEA MAKING BIG NOISE. THAT BAD OMEN! WE GO NOW, YES?!
HAR HAR IT'S WRONG Y'BE! THAT BE NOW T' BUT A CHORUS O' WELCOME FROM THE SEA AND ALL ITS CREATURES!
WHIRRD
YOW!
BLOOSH
EEK!
SPLSHH!!!
T-THAT'S A PRETTY RUDE WELCOME!
HA HA HA HA!

BEEP
WHDD
SCUPPER ME! YARR!
WHDD
WHEW
WOW THIS IS GREAT! HUMPBACKS SPERM WHALES BLUE WHALES MINKES BELUGAS GRAY WHALES COMMERSON'S DOLPHINS ORCAS WOW!
BLOOSH
BEEP BEEP
HEY LOOK! THEY'RE SWIMMING IN THE SAME DIRECTION...

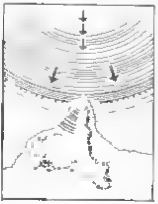
?
T-T-T-T-
TSUNAMI
!!
BBTH
RMBBB
THEY'RE HEADING TOWARDS THE WAVE?!
BBB
RMBB

RMBB
AAH!
THE WAVE'S BREAKING UP!

SKREEK
KEE KEEK

RMAABBBB
MY GOD!
THE WAVE'S BREAKING ON THE REEF EDGE AND SENDING UP A COLUMN OF SPRAY!

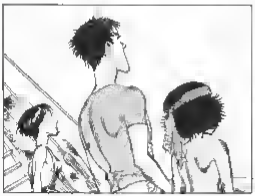
THE TIP OF THE REEF IS PUTTING A SPIN ON IT TURNING IT INTO A VORTEX! UTTERLY INCREDIBLE

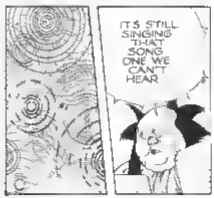


WOW! LOOKS JUST LIKE A CONCH SHELL !!
THAT'S IT!! THE GOLDEN CONCH !!
"THE TREASURE BE BELOW, SPLIT AN SINK ME ELSE!
RECEIVE MODE
BEEP
VVVVOOO

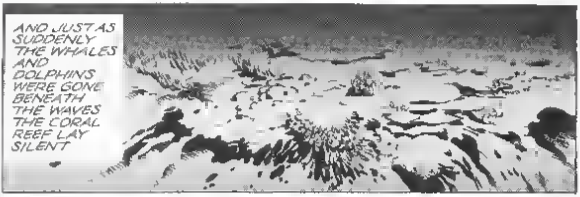
GLITTERING IN THE SUN THE GOLDEN SPIRAL OF MIST ROSE SLOWLY INTO THE AIR. THE VOICE OF THE WHALES AND DOLPHINS GATHERED BELOW JOINED TOGETHER RISING IN A WONDROUS SOUND THAT FILLED ALL THE SKY.

AT LENGTH THE CHORUS SUBSIDED IN THE SILENCE. THE GOLDEN CONE SHIMMERED LIKE A MIRAGE.





AFTER A FEW MINUTES THE "GOLDEN CONCH" DISAPPEARED...


AND JUST AS SUDDENLY THE WHALES AND DOLPHINS WERE GONE BENEATH THE WAVES THE CORAL REEF LAY SILENT

EIKO AND HAPPO LEFT THE DEATH'S HEAD AND RETURNED TO CAIRNS IN SHIRO OSAWAGI'S CHARTERED PLANE FROM THE AIR THEY COULD SEE THE PALE GLOW OF NOCTILUCENT PLANKTONS IN THE SEA BELOW.

IT WAS LIKE SEEING SOME SORT OF SPEC-TACULAR PAGEANT OF NATURE
OOK! WOOK!

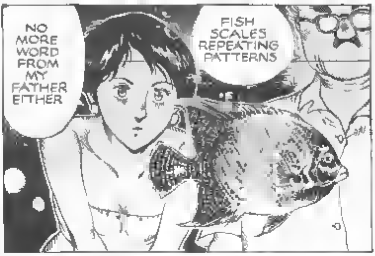
YES INDEED AND THE SHOW HAD QUITE A CAST OF CHARACTERS

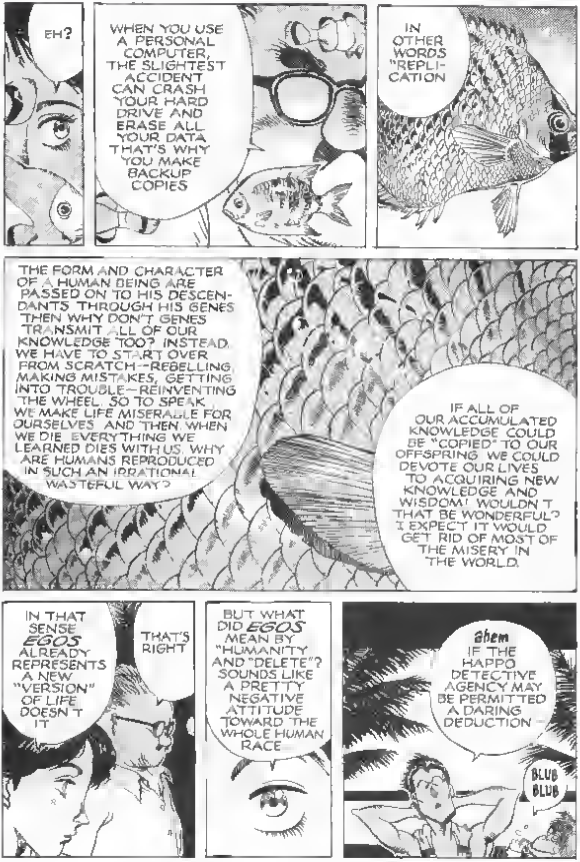
PHOSPHORESCENT PROTOZOANS COELENTERATE CORALS HUMANS WHO BRANCHED OFF FROM THE COELENTERATES SO LONG AGO TO BECOME LORDS OF THE LAND AND MARINE MAMMALS WHO LEFT THE LAND TO RETURN TO THE SEA
AND THE BIOCHIP EGOS, WHO ALONE WAS NOT CREATED BY THE GENETIC PROGRAMMING THAT DESIGNED ALL THE OTHERS

Y KNOW I JUST CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT EGOS' MOTIVES ARE! I'VE SURE NEVER HAD A CASE LIKE THIS BEFORE
YOU'RE STILL THINKING OF EGOS AS A COMMON CRIMINAL MISTER PRIVATE EYE

IT'S BEEN A MONTH SINCE THEN I WONDER WHERE EGOS WENT AFTER THAT

CAP'N PEPI AND HIS LOONY CREW ARE STILL OUT TREASURE HUNTING IN THE SWAIN REEFS
ALL THOSE SEA CREATURES GATHERED AT THE GREAT BARRIER REEF RATED ONE LITTLE FEATURE ARTICLE IN THE NEWS


NO MORE WORD FROM MY FATHER EITHER
FISH SCALES REPEATING PATTERNS


EH?
WHEN YOU USE A PERSONAL COMPUTER, THE SLIGHTEST ACCIDENT CAN CRASH YOUR HARD DRIVE AND ERASE ALL YOUR DATA. THAT'S WHY YOU MAKE BACKUP COPIES
IN OTHER WORDS "REPLICATION"
THE FORM AND CHARACTER OF A HUMAN BEING ARE PASSED ON TO HIS DESCENDANTS THROUGH HIS GENES. THEN WHY DON'T GENES TRANSMIT ALL OF OUR KNOWLEDGE TOO? INSTEAD, WE HAVE TO START OVER FROM SCRATCH--REBELLING, MAKING MISTAKES, GETTING INTO TROUBLE--REINVENTING THE WHEEL, SO TO SPEAK. WE MAKE LIFE MISERABLE FOR OURSELVES. AND THEN, WHEN WE DIE, EVERYTHING WE LEARNED DIES WITH US. WHY ARE HUMANS REPRODUCED IN SUCH AN IRRATIONAL, WASTEFUL WAY?
IF ALL OF OUR ACCUMULATED KNOWLEDGE COULD BE "COPIED" TO OUR OFFSPRING, WE COULD DEVOTE OUR LIVES TO ACQUIRING NEW KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM! WOULDN'T THAT BE WONDERFUL? I EXPECT IT WOULD GET RID OF MOST OF THE MISERY IN THE WORLD.
IN THAT SENSE EGOS ALREADY REPRESENTS A NEW "VERSION" OF LIFE. DOESN'T IT
THAT'S RIGHT
BUT WHAT DID EGOS MEAN BY "HUMANITY" AND "DELETE"? SOUNDS LIKE A PRETTY NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE
Ahem IF THE HAPPO DETECTIVE AGENCY MAY BE PERMITTED A DARING DEDUCTION
BLUB BLUB

EGOS PROBABLY PREFERS THE VAST OPEN OCEAN TO LAND, WITH ALL THE PEOPLE AND HAS DECIDED TO LIVE WITH ITS MARINE BUDDIES WHO KNOWS IT MIGHT TURN INTO A REAL MERMAID AFTER ALL
SWISH
THERE'S NO WAY OF KNOWING ITS TRUE MOTIVES BUT IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT IT MAKES SENSE--ASSUMING EGOS REALLY IS A "COLLECTIVE EGO" OF ALL HUMANITY--
THE CIVILIZATION THAT HUMAN BEINGS STRUGGLED SO HARD TO BUILD NOW THREATENS THE PLANET ITSELF
--HUMANITY" AND "DELETE" IS EGOS' MESSAGE OF FAREWELL! IT'LL TAKE ITS STORE OF HUMAN MEMORY DIVE DEEP INTO THE OCEAN AND TRY TO FORGET WHAT IT LEARNED ON LAND--
WELL YOU MIGHT WANT TO EXTRAPOLATE A LITTLE FURTHER IF SOMETHING BOTHERS YOU SURE YOU CAN REMOVE YOURSELF FROM IT BUT IT MIGHT ALSO OCCUR TO YOU TO ELIMINATE IT
BESIDES THIS PLANET'S HISTORY IS ABOUT THE EXTINCTION OF ONE SPECIES AFTER ANOTHER ANYWAY--
HUMANITY AND SUPER-HUMANITY--
HUMANITY" AND "DELETE" MEANS "DELETE HUMANITY," EH? HA HA HA NOW THAT'S ONE HELL OF A HARSH DEDUCTION!
C'MON THE SEA BREEZE IS GETTIN CHILLY LET'S DO OUR TALKING INSIDE--
WOOKI YAREE!

TO BE CONTINUED

MF Scans